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Kravchuk Reverses on Nuclear Arms Withdrawal

OW1803143392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1343 GMT 18 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk told the Russian leader Boris Yeltsin in a telephone conversation March 16 that he had changed his position regarding the timetable for the removal of tactical nuclear weapons from Ukraine and accepted the initial agreement under which all weapons should be delivered to Russia for dismantlement by July 1, 1992. IF [INTERFAX] learned that Boris Yeltsin had said this at a meeting with the leaders of the Russian parliamentary factions in the Kremlin Wednesday [17 March]. Speaking in Kiev last week, Kravchuk announced that the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from Ukraine would be suspended lest these weapons should fall "into wrong hands".

Commenting to journalists on the outcome of Yeltsin's closed-door meeting with parliamentary faction leaders, State Counselor Sergey Stankevich said Russia's attitude to the Commonwealth of Independent States had been the major topic for discussion.

According to Stankevich, Yeltsin had stressed that preserving the CIS would meet Russia's main strategic interests. Even if a number of republics chose to secede from the Commonwealth, Russia would continue its efforts to promote contacts with those republics that would like to see the CIS strengthened.

On the issue of Russo-Ukrainian dispute over the Black Sea Fleet, Yeltsin noted that "this fleet has been Russia's strategic force for the past 200 years," and that all attempts "to turn it into a divisible fishing flotilla" were unacceptable.

He also observed that Russia's military pullout from the Baltic would not mark the loss of its strategic interests in the region.

Stankevich cited Yeltsin as saying that his intention to work for a stronger Commonwealth and sign a package of 15 relevant documents at the Kiev summit on March 20 was shared by the Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev who had told Yeltsin over the phone that his republic would pool its efforts with Russia's. Yeltsin said the 9 CIS member countries had a clear-cut plan for the manufacture of military systems in 1992, under which the output of munitions would amount this year to one half of the 1991 volume. Stankevich said the president and the leaders of parliamentary factions had discussed measures to free hostages and captured hardware in the areas of inter-ethnic hostilities. Boris Yeltsin promised to use his powers of acting defense minister to order the troops "to react in a most resolute manner" to any attempts at seizing weapons. The president said the Federal treaty's signing was tentatively scheduled for March 25, and that the text of the draft treaty had been approved by all the former autonomous entities within the Russian Federation, except Tatarstan.

Reaction To Kravchuk Statement Continues

U.S. Said To Consider Sanctions

PM1803094192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 4

[Aleksandr Shalnev report: "United States Asks Ukraine To Explain Itself"]

[Text] Washington—The United States has expressed concern over the fact that Ukraine has suspended the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from its territory.

President Kravchuk, as we know, gave as the motive for the Ukrainian leadership's decision the fact that Russia, to which the weapons are being withdrawn, has not provided sufficient guarantees that the weapons will be destroyed.

In the words of State Department spokesman R. Boucher, Washington has reminded top Ukrainian officials that only last December Ukraine promised to complete the withdrawal of all tactical nuclear weapons from its territory by no later than July of this year. So far 57 percent have been withdrawn. "We have asked for additional information and explanations from the Ukrainian Government," Boucher continued. "We would like the weapons to be destroyed as soon as possible."

Washington is concerned that the intention expressed by President Kravchuk to destroy some of the warheads on Ukrainian territory will entail a significant delay in the process of the weapons' destruction, since the appropriate enterprises do not exist on Ukrainian territory, as they do in Russia.

According to reports in THE WASHINGTON POST, U.S. intelligence noted disruptions in the timetable for the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from Ukraine a week before President Kravchuk announced this publicly. However, the paper continues, the administration preferred not to take any measures then, because it was unsure whether they were dealing with a substantial change in Kiev's policy, rather than a chance event.

Now the administration is launching a thorough campaign to put pressure on Ukraine. The possibility has not been ruled out of declaring—or making very clear—to Kiev that a refusal to withdraw nuclear weapons, whatever the explanation, will force Washington to resort to measures of economic and financial pressure on Ukraine. Ukraine could face difficulties with receiving loans and credits, including from international financial organizations in which the United States plays a leading role.

West's Response Noted

PM1703114392 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Mar 92 p 3

[Article by Aleksandr Golts: "Kiev's Nuclear Gambles Have Taken Aback Not Only Moscow But Also the West"]

[Text] The consensus, at official level at least, which has been displayed by the heads of the CIS countries regarding the fate of the former Soviet Union's nuclear arsenals was one of the few buttresses still holding up the West's trust in our contradiction-torn Commonwealth. L. Kravchuk's recent statement on the suspension of the removal of tactical nuclear munitions to Russia and on plans to create their own capacities to destroy these weapons seems to have made a crack in this buttress too.

The Ukrainian leader's unexpected move has dismayed the leading Western countries for which the question of reliable control of nuclear weapons on CIS territory has been and remains very important (I recall that this was the main problem at the talks with all the numerous foreign visitors who have been in Moscow and Kiev in recent months).

"Ukrainian President Kravchuk has frequently stated his adherence to the process of the withdrawal of all nuclear arms from Ukraine's territory as rapidly as possible," U.S. State Department spokesman R. Boucher, stated in Washington. "In this connection he agreed with the accords reached in Minsk and Alma-Ata on the transfer from Ukraine to Russia of all tactical nuclear weapons by 1 July 1992 (to prepare for their dismantling) and the withdrawal of all strategic nuclear weapons by the end of 1994. We remember these commitments and therefore now as that you give us additional information and explanations."

The British Foreign Office is also seeking such additional information now. Announcing this, the Foreign Office spokeswoman deemed it necessary to mention that "Ukraine's adherence to the provisions of the arms control agreements served as the basis for recognition of that country's independence."

Finally, Ukraine's decision, REUTER reported, has caused considerable anxiety in NATO headquarters. They have seen in Kravchuk's statement evidence that the nuclear arsenal of the former USSR could remain without proper control. In the opinion of the NATO officials, the step taken by Kiev shows that Ukraine, Belarus, Kazakhstan, and Russia may not succeed in implementing their intention to complete the transportation of tactical nuclear weapons to Russia by July, as they had previously persuaded the Western countries. The nuclear arsenals threaten to become the subject of political bartering in the CIS, the NATO diplomats are concluding.

This reaction leaves no doubts that Kiev's unexpected step was in the nature of a political improvisation. It is obvious that the plans to create, with international aid, its own center for the destruction of nuclear weapons were not coordinated with those who should render the aid itself. Consequently, it is indeed a case of an intention to conduct political bartering. After all, in the opinion of THE NEW YORK TIMES, Kravchuk has not provided any proof of the justice of his suspicions that the nuclear weapons shipped out of Ukraine will not be destroyed. And now not only Moscow but also the West is having to guess what lies behind the nuclear missile interpretation of the well known saying: "I shall not swallow it, just take a nibble."

In my view, it is a case of another relapse into the temptation of the "red button" which the CIS leaders successfully overcame in Alma-Ata and Minsk. I have in mind the false sensation that possessing nuclear weapons can enhance the republics' international status and strengthen their position in disputes with each other. Obviously, a part was also played by the fact that the Russian Government, as its CIS partners have frequently stated, is conducting talks with the West on disarmament questions without painstaking consultations with the other nuclear republics. The suggestion of the French newspaper LE FIGARO that Kravchuk has had to address the nuclear weapons problem in order successfully to resist the opposition nationalist forces is also not without foundation.

However that may be, everyone agrees that it is no accident that L. Kravchuk issued his statement on the eve of the CIS leaders' meeting. The West has seen in it an attempt to put pressure on Russia.

For my part I shall not venture to predict whether this dispute will be a trump card for the Ukrainian representatives. But it is already obvious that it will in no way strengthen the international prestige either of Ukraine or of the Commonwealth as a whole. Indeed, we are seriously counting on cooperation with the West and on its support in implementing economic reforms. And at the same time with an unusual levity we are renouncing our own guarantees on a question which today is the main headache for our partners. After all, all the Western mass media are full of speculation regarding the uncontrolled spread of our nuclear weapons. And the sensation of the French television journalists who filmed talks which allegedly took place in Moscow with smugglers on the transfer of radioactive materials across the border had not died down before the foreign press published a report that Iran had become the possessor of nuclear weapons obtained in a Central Asian republic of the former USSR.

Under these conditions one cannot fail to understand the concern of the high-ranking NATO diplomat who stated in an interview with REUTER that "there are increasing signs that political motives in the rivalry between the republics are gaining the upper hand over international commitments, despite the repeated assurances conveyed to the West." The diplomat said that this could have very serious consequences...

Ukrainian Aides Comment

PM1703153392 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Mar 92 p 1

[Lieutenant Colonel A. Polyakov report under "Direct Line" rubric: "Nuclear Weapons Removal Suspended as Base Controls Are Stepped Up"]

[Text] Kiev—Kiev's media are issuing detailed reports on CIS and world reaction to Leonid Kravchuk's decision to suspend the removal of tactical nuclear weapons from Ukrainian territory. Here is how the republic's politicians and military are commenting on this event.

In a television interview, Ukrainian presidential adviser Anton Buteyko described the removal of weapons from Ukraine as a goodwill gesture insofar as the agreement concluded in Alma-Ata on their destruction is subject to ratification. But it has not been ratified, and the destruction of warheads is not being jointly monitored, so Kravchuk's decision is understandable and natural.

A conversation with Ukrainian Defense Minister Konstantin Morozov was shown on republic television late Sunday evening. In answer to a question from the television journalist on the possibility of the missiles' being destroyed in Ukraine, the minister said that Ukraine has been recognized by 108 states and as an independent power it has the right to do this. For the time being, in his words, controls at the bases where nuclear weapons are located have been stepped up. Admittedly, he did not explain why this is being done, but clearly it is primarily to prevent the uncontrolled removal of weapons.

Belarus' Chaus Comments

OW1703204592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1843 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Belarussian Defense Minister Petr Chaus approved Ukraine's decision to stop the transfer of tactical nuclear weapons to Russia. He feels that the destruction of the weapons "must be supervised". In an interview with "INTERFAX" Chaus said that Belarus "is considering the problem of shipping nuclear weapons to Russia".

Chaus said concerning the reductions of offensive weapons in the republic that "if Belarus sells weapons it will do so in strict observance of international agreements". This obviously refers to the accumulation of a large number of tanks in the Belarussian repubic.

Concerning the trade of weapons by Belarussian military factories Chaus said "we are already receiving orders".

Chaus said regarding the recent comments at a press conference of the head of the Belarussian parliament criticizing the Commonwealth United Armed Forces, that "we have many complaints". Most of the complaints are connected with the ingorance of legislative acts passed by the republics.

Decision Viewed

PM1803130192 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 14 Mar 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast: Announcer-read report]

[Excerpt] [Announcer] Today the Russian Foreign Ministry issued a statement in connection with the fact that Ukraine is suspending the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from its territory. The Russian Foreign Ministry points out that this step does not fit in with the accords reached between the Commonwealth countries. A few days ago the West was ready to applaud Ukraine for its firm decision to become a nuclear-free power. President Kravchuk said that by this July tactical installations [takticheskiye ustanovki], along with their weapons [zaryady], would have left Ukrainian territory. But on 12 March Kiev suddenly halted the withdrawal of weapons to Russia. Even though it is known that almost 60 percent of these weapons have already been removed and even though Ukraine still swears that it will acquire nuclear-free status, the matter is so serious that it cannot help but cause concern, above all in Russia.

Why has Ukraine's position changed so drastically, within a matter of days? Perhaps something happened in this short time in Russia, making it unacceptable to Ukraine for its weapons to be taken to Russia? Perhaps the position of the incumbent Russian authorities ahead of 17 March no longer inspires the Ukrainian leadership's confidence? Perhaps perspicacious Kravchuk suddenly glimpsed the sinister shadow of Zhirinovskiy looming over independent autonomous Ukraine from Moscow? It is hard to tell, but one cannot take seriously Ukraine's plans to build its own enterprises to destroy warheads. According to experts, these enterprises simply do not exist there. Warheads can only be destroyed by an explosion, and an explosion on territory that has still not gotten over Chernobyl would be terrifying.

The Ukrainian president's press service explained today that the president has only expressed doubts that the weapons being removed are actually being destroyed, and concern that this process is effectively being carried out without supervision [beskontrolno]. Kravchuk advocated temporarily suspending the removal of these weapons. Admittedly, that is little explanation. [passage omitted]

U.S. Embassies Open in CIS Republics

OW1803020092 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1843 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] U.S. embassies were opened in Baku and Ashkhabad, the capitals of Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan respectively, on March 17.

Robert Finn became U.S. charge d'affaires in Azerbaijan and Jeffrey White, in Turkmenistan. Speaking at the inauguration ceremony in Ashkhabad, White emphasized the U.S. willingness to cultivate ties with Turkmenistan in view of its "rich potential and oil and gas reserves."

Uzbek President Islam Karimov received Tuesday [17 March] U.S. charge d'affaires Michael Mozur. The president said that Uzbekistan was extremely interested in the development of political, economic and cultural relations with the USA. According to him, 40 countries have expressed willingness to open embassies in Turkmenistan.

The inauguration ceremony took place in Tashkent on Monday [16 March].

Bush Urges Armenia, Azerbaijan To End Bloodshed

OW1803010692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1843 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] U.S. President George Bush has urged Armenia and Azerbaijan to end bloodshed. This report provided by the U.S. White House press secretary Marlin Fitzwater was made public by the Armenian presidential press service Tuesday [17 March]. The report says "the U.S. joins Russia and other states in favoring a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and call on the Armenian and Azeri government to do the same."

Meanwhile, on Wednesday, March 18, the special envoy of the UN Secretary-General, former U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance is expected to arrive in Yerevan on a peaceful mission. On Tuesday he visited Azerbaijan.

Cease-Fire Envisaged Within 7 Days

LD1603145492 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1200 GMT 16 Mar 92

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Iranian Foreign Minister Velayati and Russian ambassador to Iran Gudev attended today's final meeting in Tehran to work out the draft agreement on a settlement in Nagorno-Karabakh, at which final amendments were made to the document.

The Russian ambassador, invited to the meeting by the Iranian minister, participated in the talks as an observer. Velayati, who signed the draft agreement jointly with the Azerbaijani and Armenian deputy defense ministers, stated that the document will be submitted for approval to the heads of the two states and will then come into force. According to the minister, it envisages a cease-fire within the next seven days.

Draft Agreement Signed

PM1703163192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 4

[Konstantin Eggert report: "Russia Remains on the Sidelines. Against the Background of the Continued Fighting in Nagorno-Karabakh a Draft Treaty for an Truce Has Been Signed in Tehran"]

[Text] Representatives of Armenia and Azerbaijan have signed a draft agreement on settling the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh, ITAR-TASS reports. After two days of negotiations in Tehran involving Iranian officials in the role of intermediaries, the sides worked out the basic principles for a solution to the problem. It is proposed that a temporary cease-fire be achieved which afterward should become permanent, an exchange of prisoners and bodies of the dead be carried out, and the economic blockade of the population centers in the conflict zone be lifted.

Vladimir Gusev, Russian ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran, whom 'Ali Akbar Velayati, Iranian minister of foreign affairs, had invited, participated in the final meeting as an observer. Velayati, who signed the draft agreement together with Albert Salamov and Armen Navasardyan, the Azerbaijani and Armenian deputy ministers of foreign affairs, stated at a short briefing for journalists that this document will be presented to the heads of the two republics for confirmation, after which it will come into force. The minister pointed out that it stipulates a cease-fire within the coming seven days. Velayati refused to disclose details of the agreement, indicating that they will be made public only after the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders have confirmed the document.

The report from Tehran vies in importance with news reported by the REUTER agency: Cyrus Vance, personal representative of the UN secretary general and former U.S. secretary of state, who returned to active politics last year as an intermediary for the United Nations in the Yugoslav conflict, is going to Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Karabakh for the first time this week. It was largely thanks to his efforts that a cease-fire was achieved between the Serbs and Croats, which paved the way for UN peacekeeping forces to be sent to the Balkans.

In the coming days the world will become witness to unprecedented diplomatic activity around Nagorno-Karabakh. Apart from Vance, Jiri Dienstbier, current CSCE chairman and minister of foreign affairs of the CSFR; Mahmud Vaezi [name as transliterated], Iranian deputy minister of foreign affairs; and a delegation of the Islamic Conference Organization will be setting off for the region.

Today Iranian diplomacy has proved to be more effective than that of others. It is not, however, worth exaggerating the success which has been achieved in Tehran. Everything depends on whether President Ter-Petrosyan and the present Azerbaijani head of state Mamedov will approve the bilateral agreements. According to information from ASSOCIATED PRESS, the Armenian representatives at the negotiations expressed the certainty that Yerevan will support the accords, whereas the Azerbaijani officials evasively noted that approval of the measures proposed in the Tehran documents will depend on "time and future circumstances."

Azerbaijan's position can be explained adequately: Any truce at this moment will strengthen the certain military advantage which the Armenian armed formations have gained. In the meantime, as the agencies report, such an influential political force as the People's Front of Azerbaijan, is, through the words of its representatives, coming out in favor of a decisive counteroffensive and seizure of the initiative in the combat operations. It is worth recalling that on the day his predecessor A. Mutalibov resigned, acting President Yagub Mamedov stated that he would do everything he could for a peaceful settlement, and even hinted at the possibility of a personal meeting with Ter-Petrosyan.

You cannot pass over the fact that the Russian Federation's ambassador was present only at the final meeting of the Tehran negotiations, and only as an observer whom Velayati—not the warring sides—had invited on a personal basis. The agreements signed on Sunday in essence canceled out the significance of the Kozyrev-Ovanesyan-Sadykhov Moscow communique of 20 February, and buried the Russian peace initiative which Europe and Turkey had welcomed but which had no chance of succeeding in Armenia and Azerbaijan. It is necessary to recognize that Moscow does not possess effective means of political and diplomatic pressure on both states, and due to accords concluded within the CIS, Russia will not be able to resort to economic pressure. Having been consumed by internal problems, it is becoming an outside observer of what is happening in the Transcaucasus.

Commentary on NATO Troops in Nagorno-Karabakh

LD1703215892 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1210 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Commentary by Anatoliy Potapov]

[Excerpts] The so-called crisis committee of the Helsinki Process has passed a decision in the Finnish capital about measures to help with a settlement in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Now an opinion of our commentator, Anatoliy Potapov. [passage omitted] By the way, I regard as absolutely ill-thought-out the idea aired recently in Brussels by some NATO ministers. The idea is to use perhaps NATO troops to stop the hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh. I believe the idea to resort to the Western military bloc would not get approval in the Helsinki Process. It's devoid of understanding the very essence of the interethnic conflict and the highly complex situation in the Caucasus.

The crisis committee's program is clearly political and humanitarian. There is the hopeful fact that the all-European structures are going into effect simultaneously with actions by the United Nations. Talks are to be held now in the conflict area by a personal envoy of the UN secretary general, Cyrus Vance, acting as a mediator. In any case, considering the fact that the Yugoslav crisis has produced doubts in the world community about the possibilities of the Helsinki Process to ensure peace and security, the crisis committee has decided to act swiftly and vigorously.

Burlakov Interviewed on Withdrawal From FRG

PM1303120192 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 12 Mar 92 p 5

[Interview with General Matvey Burlakov, commander of the Western Group of Forces, by Aleksandr Stepanov in Berlin; date of interview not given: "Whose Bombs Are Rusting in German Soil?"]

[Text] When people speak of the withdrawal of the Western Group of Forces from Germany, you usually hear the same smooth official wording—"the withdrawal is proceeding according to plan." What lies behind this wording? Colonel General M.P. Burlakov, commander of the Western Group of Forces, answers these and other questions from your PRAVDA correspondent.

Berlin—[Burlakov] Now I can admit that early this year I believed we would manage to fulfill the withdrawal program only with enormous difficulty. The excessive appetites of Poland, which demanded an absurdly large sum for our troops' transit, forced us to choose the most complex option—the maritime one.

[Stepanov] In the future it should probably be simpler?

[Burlakov] Perhaps. The adjacent states, realizing that we could not be taken "by storm," amended their demands to sensible proportions and now troops will also travel by dry land—through Poland and Czechoslovakia.

We have kept exactly to last year's schedule. Here are the figures: 165,000 men, 1,514 tanks, 2,314 armored combat vehicles, 1,313 artillery systems, and 250 aircraft and helicopters have left FRG territory. We have withdrawn 317.5 tonnes of ammunition alone! In all we have withdrawn from Germany six divisions—four motorized rifle divisions, one armored division, and one aviation division. Over the past year we have handed over to the German side 249 military townships and completely withdrawn from two federal land capitals—Erfurt and Magdeburg. This year we shall free 59 population centers of troops, including Dresden.

[Stepanov] Which of the problems connected with the withdrawal would you call the most difficult?

[Burlakov] I am particularly concerned for those who are called "apartmentless" in the army; that is the people who essentially have nowhere to go. By the start of the withdrawal we had no more and no less than 55,000 of these families—nearly 200,000 people in all with the wives and children.

[Stepanov] Yet as is well known, foreign firms are to construct the housing, albeit not all of it!

[Burlakov] Exactly, they are not constructing it all. The 7.8 billion marks allocated by the FRG Government should be enough only for 36,000 apartments. Do you see the difference? We were 19,000 apartments short from the outset and over the past year the problems have only multiplied—many of those who had apartments in the Baltic republics can now also be considered to have lost them. After all, the troops will also withdraw from there.

[Stepanov] What do you propose doing?

[Burlakov] I have just received a Russian Government resolution—after all, the Western Group of Forces troops are under its jurisdiction—which authorizes us to buy apartments. The "apartmentless" servicemen will pay hemselves and the Western Group of Forces will pay some of the cost.

[Stepanov] From what funds?

[Burlakov] From those it has earned. After all, you see, we live under the conditions of a market economy. I want to stress that this money has indeed been earned and not received from, for instance, the sale of the real estate or property of the Western Group of Forces. For example, fences.

[Stepanov] ?? [as published]

[Burlakov] Yes, fences. We lease them to various firms as billboards. We also lease the German side other establishments—after all, over the course of 40 years we have not only constructed airfields and testing ranges here. A third source is the most traditional. It is the bank interest which accumulates on the Western Group of Forces funds kept in financial institutions here. According to our calculations the apartments will be acquired on a half and half basis—the serviceman will pay 50 percent and the Western Group of Forces will make up the other 50 percent.

There is one more way—by selling the real estate that belongs to us.

[Stepanov] Do you not believe that the German side is seeking to delay the solution of this question? Is it not calculating that you cannot take it all with you anyway?

[Burlakov] Yes, sometimes that is what I think too. The matter is advancing only very cumbersomely. On the German side the Ministry of Finances is in charge of selling and obviously it has no reason to hurry.

[Stepanov] As is well known, they want to link the question of the sale of our property with compensation for the ecological damage which is being demanded from us?

[Burlakov] How is this damage to be calculated? You can get bogged down in talks here for a hundred years. Incidentally, to this day in our work to recultivate land we encounter German bombs. Did the British and Americans not bomb Germany? Are their bombs not rusting in German soil?

In brief, it is a political decision, as they say nowadays. It looks as though the Germans are also beginning to understand that.

[Stepanov] When it is a case of specific damage?

[Burlakov] We are trying with all our might to make it good. We are collecting the garbage, digging out reservoirs with fuel and lubricants, draining and replacing topsoil, and recultivating the soil. There are six combat engineer battalions working on it. We asked the FRG Ministry of Ecology to give us their specialists for consultation, because we are soldiers and do not have the relevant experience. So far we have received no reply.

[Stepanov] Nonetheless, Matvey Prokopyevich, withdrawal is all very well but the main task of any troops is to maintain combat capability. Are you pleased with your soldiers' training?

[Burlakov] On the whole, yes. I shall say frankly that this is achieved through the colossal workload of our officers and ensigns.

[Stepanov] Are you pleased with discipline?

[Burlakov] At any rate we are giving the German side no extra cause for complaint.

[Stepanov] And deserters?

[Burlakov] After the first eruption their number is now small, far smaller than in the troops on CIS territory. You have probably noticed that the press has cooled off as regards this subject, have you not?

[Stepanov] Now that a whole year of work to withdraw the troops from Germany is behind you—and you also have the Hungarian experience—have you any more confidence of success?

[Burlakov] I can firmly promise that I shall do everything in my power to ensure that people continue to say the same thing about the withdrawal of the Western Group of Forces—"it is proceeding as planned."

Commonwealth

Further on Sixth Extraordinary USSR Congress

Deputies Plan New Union Treaty

LD1703205692 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1500 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Report by correspondent Yevgeniy Zherebenkov on a meeting of the former USSR congress of people's deputies at Voronovo Village Hall on 17 March]

[Excerpts] A total of 200 USSR people's deputies gathered in Moscow and had a chance to indulge themselves to the full in playing the illegal gatherings game. Nobody knew until the last moment where the extraordinary congress would take place or whether it would take place at all. [passage omitted]

Sazhi Umalatova opened the congress by reading an introductory statement with a pocket flashlight. Congress participants were taken to the remote area and were told that considering the extraordinary nature of the event, the absence of a quorum does not obstruct adoption of the documents prepared by the organizing committee. It was only on the bus that an 18-page package of documents was actually handed to the former deputies, who hardly had any time at all to look at them. This circumstance, however, did not prevent them from being unilaterally adopted. There are about 15 documents in all, including resolutions on: protecting the constitutional system and the homeland, the USSR president's resignation, preventing the country from being dragged into NATO, and the illegality of stripping USSR people's deputies of their powers. Anatoliy Lukyanov's greetings message from Matrosskaya Tishina was also read aloud, expressing regret that he could not join the former deputies at the congress. A permanent presidium of the congress was formed to draw up a new union treaty and to prepare the next USSR congress of people's deputies, which, as those gathered in Voronovo are convinced, will take place at all costs. The former union deputies decided to cancel a resolution they had adopted earlier on their consent to the arrest of their colleagues in the Supreme Soviet; Chairman Lukyanov; and former Deputies Baklanov, Boldin, Varennikov, and Shenin. They also demanded Latvian authorities release Alfred Rubiks, the former Latvian Communist Party leader and a union deputy. Colonel Alksnis described the results of the congress in a picturesque way:

[Begin Alksnis recording] From the national point of view, it represents...[changes thought] You can imagine a besieged fortress smashed to bits, ruins, and destruction everywhere. The garrison is completely demoralized and ready to capitulate. Just at this moment, a banner is raised over one of the bastions, and the garrison of the fortress, with doubled energy, launches an attack. [end recording]

CIS Declared 'Null and Void'

OW1703170192 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1602 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] A group of the former Soviet Union's parliamentarians that held an emergency congress at the village of Voronovo near Moscow declared the decision to establish a Commonwealth of Independent States, passed by the 11 republics of the former Soviet Union, null and void, said Colonel Victor Alksnis, one of the congress organizers, to IF [INTERFAX]. The congress, which the Russian authorities described as illegitimate, enacted 15 documents, including those on the country's socio-economic situation, international situation and the military, said Alksnis.

The congress confirmed the existence of the USSR as a subject of international law, said Alksnis.

The congress lasted less than two hours but elected a working presidium which included, Sazhi Umalatova (chairwoman), Aleksandr Obolenskiy, Anatoliy Denisov, Roy Medvedev, Leonid Sukhov, Alksnis and several other parliamentarians.

According to Alksnis, the presidium was instructed to prepare another congress which, the colonel said, "is just around the corner."

The congress drew an attendance of around 400, said Alksnis, but Umalatova set the number of the parliamentarians at 216 in an interview with IF.

Speaking of the "popular veche" called by the Soviet parliamentarians in Moscow, Alksnis said that "the main thing is to prevent conflicts and casualties."

According to him, there are groups of professional provocateurs instructed to start riots. He did not rule out the possibility of reprisals against the rally participants.

DOCUMENTS ENACTED IN VORONOVO

These include:

Statement Umalatova told IF that the statement endorses Gorbachev's resignation as Soviet president and condemns the "Belovezhkoye coup."

Resolution "On The Protection Of The Country's Constitutional Order."

Statement "On the Protection Of The Country's Territorial Integrity."

Resolution "On The Attitude Toward The Acts Of The Union Republics Putting An End To The Activities Of USSR Parliamentarians."

Resolution "On Proclamation Of Republican Independence."

Resolution (separate) "On The Resignation Of Soviet President M.S.Gorbachev."

Resolution "On The Next Congress Of USSR People's Deputies."

Resolution "On USSR Armed Forces" which calls for the preservation of a common military.

Statement "On The Inadmissibility of Involving The Country Into The North Atlantic Treaty Organization."

Statement "On The Inadmissibility of Interference By Foreign Countries Into the Domestic Affairs of Our Country."

Appeal "To Members Of The Armed Forces" which proclaims the need to put an end to all wars on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

Statement "On Socio-Economic Situation And The Need For Joint Actions To Save The Country And The People."

Resolution "On The Socio-Economic Situation Of The Country And Emergency Measures To Break The Crisis."

Statement in defense of independent mass media.

Resolution "On The Repeal Of The Resolution Of the USSR Supreme Soviet Of August 22, 1991, And August 29 On Agreement To The Arrest Of The USSR People's Deputies."

Statement "On The International Situation Of The Country And Disarmament Problems."

Alksnis, Umalatova Comment

LD1703210792 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Interview with Viktor Alksnis and Sazhi Umalatova by unidentified correspondent on a meeting of the former USSR congress of people's deputies at Voronovo Village Hall on 17 March; from the "Vesti" newscast—recorded]

[Text] [Correspondent] What resolution was adopted, if any?

[Alksnis] Many were adopted, a whole package of documents. However, they are, in a sense, of a declarative nature—in other words, they are not calls to overthrow (?revolutionary) power and so on. No. First, we review what has actually happened and declare that unlawful, unconstitutional actions have taken place in the CIS through the signing of the CIS agreement and that the USSR—and the congress—continues to exist.

[Correspondent] What are your impressions of the congress?

[Umalatova] Today is the happiest day of my life. We held the congress and said the Union exists. Just let anyone try to say that there is no Union!

Alksnis: 'Trends Toward Unification'

OW1703201592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1843 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Viktor Alksnis, one of the participants in the Congress of Deputies of the former USSR, said in an interview with IF [INTERFAX] that the congress that took place Tuesday [17 March] in the village of Voronovo near Moscow demonstrated the presence within the borders of the former USSR of trends toward unification. Alksnis joined the working presidium created at the congress with Sazhi Umalatova at the head to prepare the next congress.

It is significant, said Alksnis, that the same documents were supported by people with very difference political convictions, for example social-democrat Obolenskiy and orthodox communist Makashov.

The main result of the congress is the fact that "USSR people's deputies have proclaimed themselves."

Mikhail Gorbachev will have to make a report before the next USSR congress which, Alksnis said, would take place in a normal atmosphere. "He resigned as president of his own will, but no one has relieved him of responsibility for what is taking place in the USSR," said Alksnis.

Participants Comment

PM1703221792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Georgiy Ivanov-Smolenskiy report: "'Historic' Congress at Voronovo State Farm"]

[Text] It was a strange sight from the outset. A strange concourse. Apparently there had never been so many journalists before in the lobby of the Moskva Hotel—around 800 of them had gathered there. From time to time they threw themselves en masse from one corner to another where spotlights had gone on, indicating that another "star" of the past or present political scene had appeared in the hall. Ye.K. Ligachev, former Politburo member and the CPSU's main ideologist; former Union deputies L. Sukhov, a driver from Kharkov, and V. Alksnis, a colonel from Latvia; and General A. Makashov, an unsuccessful candidate for Russian president.

Western colleagues earned their crust honestly before squeezing out of each crowd in turn and dispersing, laughing, until the arrival of the next participant in the event called the "Extraordinary Sixth Congress of USSR People's Deputies." The show continued. And the longer it went on the more the feeling of awkwardness prevailed. The feeling that you normally have in the company of someone who is not capable of looking at themselves objectively.

Yegor Ligachev remains true to the "socialist option":

"The CIS is a kind of capsule. If you put something in it, something that is really capable of creating a Commonwealth, that would be useful. But by and large I believe that, at the moment, the CIS is a screen for the disintegration of the Soviet Union."

In answer to IZVESTIYA's question about whether the deputies present could somehow influence the future and effect the restoration of the former Soviet Union, Yegor Kuzmich put a finger to his lips conspiratorially and then added that he was "not a werewolf or a turncoat but an optimist, who believes that in the end we will all be together."

"Every day we booked three or four places," Yu. Golik complained in another circle of journalists, "but in the evening we were turned away every time. Some buses were meant to arrive at 0730, and now it is 0930, and they have still not arrived. I do not think that this will turn out well. Can you see what is happening here? The deputies have practically gone underground."

Colonel Petrushenko gave the following answer to the question—what will the organizers of the event do if the buses do not arrive: "If they do not arrive, we will think about it. That is what our heads are for, to think, and not just to wear hats."

V. Zhirinovskiy, who was among the deputies, was apocalyptic as usual.

"The situation is getting worse and will continue to do so daily. This will lead to an explosion. And we want to see that happen."

Meanwhile the buses arrived despite the organizers' worries. And the cavalcade, accompanied by dozens if not hundreds of cars belonging to journalists, moved toward Podolsk. Within an hour the inhabitants were observing the string of Toyotas, Mercedes, and Volvos in amazement. And within half an hour the deputies' event began in the "Druzhba" Cultural Center in the Voronovo Sovkhoz near Moscow. It took just over an hour, and around 150 former deputies participated in it.

A package of 18 statements and resolutions, handed out on the way there in the buses, was adopted practically unanimously without discussion.

To the timid observation by one of the participants in the event to the effect that being in the dark and in a hurry you can make a lot of blunders and be a laughing stock in the eyes of the whole world, Sazhi Umalatov objected: "We have already been a laughing stock for three years." She also stressed proudly: "Despite the fact that the administration of Moscow Oblast and the sovkhoz have asked us to leave the premises, by gathering here we have made it clear to the whole world that our country, the Soviet Union, exists."

With that, they dispersed.

'It Was Great Fun'

LD1703164692 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1400 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Interview with reporter Kirill Shakhnovich by unidentified studio announcer; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Announcer] If I understand correctly, Kirill, you were able to watch today's so-called Congress of USSR People's Deputies.

[Shakhnovich] No, not so. I was in one of the 40 cars with foreign reporters chasing after the deputies in the woods of Podolsk, but I could not track them down because, of course, we were all given the slip. Somewhere along the potholed and crumbling roads we asked a polite policeman—Zhirinovskiy was standing next to me—where is the deputies' motorcade? It must have passed by here! But we found nothing.

However, I did manage to meet up with a film crew from the Tsentr program who showed me what they have shot. They were the only Soviet [as heard] television reporters there, so this is fairly unique material and I will briefly describe it to you.

The congress took place by candlelight. It was quite a splendid sight. Imagine a collective farm clubhouse, a stage with two bullhorns, and there is the valiant and noble Alksnis standing there and holding a candle. Huddled up next to him is people's deputy Sazhi Ulumatova reading an appeal to the prisoners of Matrosskaya Tishina [the jail where the coup plotters are held]. There were 217 deputies, the lights kept going out, there was the usual brawling at the doorway because they did not want to let journalists in, and indeed very few managed to get past.

The congress adopted some quite curious resolutions. For example, 217 is nothing like a quorum but this was an extraordinary congress, and because deputy Krayko said that it can pass rulings, it was deemed quorate. This extraordinary congress is the preparation for the next one, the seventh. Deputy Obolenskiy said that at the extraordinary session that will supposedly take place, Gorbachev should answer to the country for all that's happened.

Then they passed a number of statements: on the release of the Matrosskaya Tishina coup detainees and of Rubiks, the main Latvian ex-communist. In addition there was a statement on the Minsk agreements and how they are null and void, a statement on how the heads of state should meet again, and why there should be a popularly elected president of the USSR.

[Announcer] This means the creation of the CIS, right? The Belovezhkoye agreements?

[Shakhnovich] The Belovezhskoye agreements and the heads of state who have already seceded—they should all reunite and do something immediately. While we are talking about this, I will tell you the best thing of all. I am an art fan and have always been interested in what is happening around me. I have never in my life seen anything like what these communist people's deputies got up to—Zhirinovskiy and a motorcade scouring the potholed roads and forest in search of people's deputies out in the snow, and all the scenes by candlelight, and the fighting, etc. It was great fun!

Customs Official Comments on Customs Union

LD1803113392 Moscow TASS in English 0916 GMT 18 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Mariya Kuzmenkova]

[Text] Moscow March 18 TASS—Five republics of the ex-USSR have agreed on a single customs policy at their meeting in Moscow on March 13.

Their heads of government signed the agreement on the creation of a customs union between Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

The union means "a common customs territory, common rules and an absence of internal customs barriers", deputy head of the Russian Customs Committee Valeriy Kruglikov told ITAR-TASS.

This alliance is a necessary condition for the preservation and normal functioning of old economic ties. He said its member countries "will find themselves in a more advantageous position as compared to other republics of the former USSR".

Organisers also plan to form a customs council as a guiding and coordinating body.

Kruglikov said that Belarus, Moldova and Armenia signed only some articles of the agreement and insisted on making several amendments. According to Kruglikov, it was unclear what relations will be like with Ukraine. Its representative formally endorsed the creation of the union but did not have authority to sign the agreement.

Relations with states that refuse to join the customs union will "be built on the basis of bilateral relations".

Baltics

Further on 16 Mar Meeting of Baltic Council

Decides Not To Pay USSR's Debt

OW1803022892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1903 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From the "Business Report": transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Baltic Council, the intergovernmental coordinating body for the Baltic states, issued a statement on the USSR's external debt in a meeting March 16 in Jurmala (Latvia). The document states that the Baltic states will not act as successors to the former Soviet Union and in that regard cannot take responsibility for servicing and repaying the external debt of the former USSR. The announcement also protested Russia's unilateral decision to block the hard-currency assets held in Vneshekonombank belonging to member-republics of the former USSR. The meeting in Jurmala was attended by parliamentary leaders from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, Vytautas Landsbergis, Anatolijs Gorbunovs and Arnold Ruutel.

States' Solidarity 'Not Boundless'

LD1703220392 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The Baltic States Council has expressed solidarity with the Russian authorities regarding the congress of the former USSR deputies. The Council supports the Russian Parliament and also regards this gathering as a provocation and an attempt to revive the totalitarian empire.

The council's statement was signed by the leaders of the three Baltic countries: Gorbunovs, Landsbergis, and Ruutel.

However, the feeling of solidarity is not boundless. It is running out where the national interests of the Baltic states start. That is why in Jurmala, the same three leaders and, so to speak, in the same ink, signed another statement which states that the dialogue between Russia and the Baltic states with regard to the withdrawal of troops is proceeding unsatisfactorily. The demands of the Baltic states are being ignored. The threat to sovereignty remains.

To Meet in Tallinn 'Next Week'

OW1803003692 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1744 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On Monday [16 March] the Baltic Council agreed to hold a working meeting between the prime ministers of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania Tiit Vahi, Ivars Godmanis and Gediminas Vagnorius in Tallinn next week. As the head of the Estonian government Tiit Vahi told a news conference in Tallinn [passage as received], the meeting is expected to focus on the principles of economic cooperation between the Baltics, as well as border and customs control, mutual payments, trade with the Commonwealth countries and information exchange between the Baltics' governments. The exact date of the meeting has not yet been set.

Military

Troops Withdraw From Armenia-Azerbaijan Border

LD1803114292 Moscow TASS in English 1120 GMT 18 Mar 92

[Text] Moscow March 18 TASS—Troops had to destroy several dozen armoured vehicles and lorries during a pull-out from the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Army pull-out was ordered by Yevgeniy

Shaposhnikov, commander-in-chief of the CIS Armed Forces. According to the Army press centre, the pull-out was completed.

As the Army was pulling out, the warring armed groups stepped up their efforts to capture military hardware. During the withdrawal of six posts of the 4th Army from the area of Gyandzha armed groups and local population captured six units of armoured vehicles and five lorries. In these circumstances the command decided to destroy that part of the equipment which could not be withdrawn.

Seventeen armoured vehicles and 60 lorries were destroyed in the area of Gyandzha. Six armoured personnel carriers, two armoured vehicles and one reconnaissance vehicle were destroyed when three border posts of the 7th Army were pulling out.

Transcaucasian Forces To Combat Armory Attacks

LD1703184192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1616 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS "special correspondent" Aleksandr Krasulin, Sergey Postanogov, and AZERINFORM correspondent Sabir Mirzoyev]

[Text] Baku, 17 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The Transcaucasian Military District command has ordered combat weapons to be used in the event of attacks on troop units or armories and attempts to seize military hardware, Lieutenant General Sufiyan Beppayev, Transcaucasian Military District deputy commander, told a news conference here today.

He also reported that all depots and other military installations will be mined with warning devices to avoid accidental casualties. The general noted that these extreme measures have been brought about because of increasing attacks on military installations on the district's territory in efforts to seize weapons. Over 70 criminal acts have been committed against the Army over the last 10 weeks alone, as a result of which seven people have been killed and 34 injured.

Sufiyan Beppayev stressed that Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov, CIS Armed Forces commander in chief, has ordered the Army not to support either side in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and to strictly observe neutrality. He categorically refuted the possibility of the Armenian side using chemical and bacteriological weapons allegedly seized from one of the district's military depots, stating that there are no such depots on Transcaucasus Military District territory.

Caucasus' Fate Likely Decided at Kiev Summit

OW1803055992 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1602 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Deputy commander of the Caucasian military district Lieutenant General Sufiyan Beppayev said "the fate of the district will probably be decided at the summit of Commonwealth leaders in Kiev March 20."

In an interview with "Interfax" Beppayev said that along with Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia would have a say in the fate of the Caucasian military district.

"If the decision is made to withdraw forces from the Caucasus the process must be clearly organized and be carried out gradually over several years," the General said. "We mustn't repeat the poor example of removing forces from East Europe."

Beppayev recommended that an agreement outlining the withdrawal process be signed between Russia and the Caucasian republics. If at the meeting the leaders decide not to withdraw the forces, their status, rights, and nature of activities must be legally confirmed.

Officers' Panel Discusses Servicemen's Rights

PM1803102792 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Mar 92 p 1

[Unattributed report: "At the Officers' Assemblies' Coordinating Council"]

[Text] A regular session of the Coordinating Council of the CIS Joint Armed Forces Officers' Assemblies held 12 March examined the question "On the position of Armed Forces servicemen and veterans and the members of their families in the states of the Baltic region, the Transcaucasus, Moldova, and certain regions of Ukraine, and respect for the rights of servicemen in these regions." The adopted decision proposes that:

1. In view of the exceptional circumstances surrounding Armed Forces servicemen and veterans and the members of their families in the Baltic region, the Transcaucasus, Moldova, and certain regions of Ukraine, a joint session of the Coordinating Council Presidium and representatives of Officers' Assemblies and veterans' and women's organizations in the said regions be held in the period 25 through 30 March 1992, with invitations extended to Russian President B. Yeltsin; Russian Supreme Soviet Chairman R. Khasbulatov; S. Shakhray, head of the Russian delegation at the talks with the Baltic countries; Marshal of Aviation Ye. Shaposhnikov, commander in chief of the CIS Joint Armed Forces; and the presidents of the sovereign republics of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.

2. Given the increasing incidence of antiarmy activity in the said regions and the attendant death of servicemen and the seizure of hostages, military property and real estate and combat hardware, and Armed Forces installations which are under Russian jurisdiction, Russian President B. Yeltsin, the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet and Government, and CIS Joint Armed Forces Commander in Chief Marshal of Aviation Ye. Shaposhnikov be urged to adopt without delay effective measures to decisively halt such activity and secure the return of all misappropriated property. In view of the existing situation, unit commanders should be granted

the right to issue officer personnel with personal weapons and ammunition, instructing them to apply resolute measures where necessary to protect servicemen and members of their families, as well as military property and real estate and combat hardware.

3. Bearing in mind that the process of withdrawing and disbanding troops from the Baltic states and East Europe began without due consideration for the social and legal protection of servicemen, CIS Joint Armed Forces Commander in Chief Marshal of Aviation Ye. Shaposhnikov be petitioned to grant the Coordinating Council, the Council of Officers' Assemblies of the Northwestern Group of Forces, and other formations, combined units, and units stationed in the Baltic region the right to monitor the activity of all commercial structures involved in the sale of military property and real estate, combat hardware, and weapons.

4. The Russian Federation President be requested to include representatives of the CIS Joint Armed Forces Officers' Assemblies Coordinating Council and the Officers' Assemblies of the Baltic region in the delegation for interstate talks with Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia and the states of the Transcaucasus.

5. With the purpose of providing reliable social protection for servicemen and members of their families and the combined units and units being withdrawn and disbanded, the CIS Joint Armed Forces commander in chief be requested to coordinate with the Officers' Assemblies the schedules for the withdrawal and disbandment of the units.

6. The decision of the Council of the Northwestern Group of Forces Officers' Assemblies to refuse to withdraw, redeploy, or disband combined units and units without creating the social conditions for service and for respect for the rights of servicemen and members of their families be supported.

Political & Social

Moscow, Kiev Poll on Economy, Politics Cited

PM1703165792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Report by Nugzar Betaneli, director of the Institute of Sociology of Parliamentarianism: "Identical Sentiments in Russian and Ukrainian Capitals"]

[Text] On 12 March the independent Institute of Sociology of Parliamentarianism conducted another weekly poll of 1,000 Muscovites on behalf of the "Itogi" program of the Television News Agency. A second parallel telephone poll of more than 400 residents of Kiev was conducted from Moscow 13 March.

Since the government's "memorandum" proposing further growth in prices the people's general social feeling has begun to deteriorate. The number of people dissatisfied with life has increased from 65 to 69 percent over the past two weeks. It is quite likely that we are threatened with a repeat of the January psychological crisis following the "first" price hike. In February the number of people unable to adapt to the new prices fell to 34 percent. But during the first two weeks of March the needle of the "barometer of public sentiments" again began to move in the opposite direction: Already 36 percent of Muscovites believe that it is impossible to endure the new prices.

All changes in the psychological state of Muscovites are significant in their own way, but one of them is probably most noticeable. A comparative analysis of 11 weekly polls shows that never before has the rating of B. Yeltsin's economic policy been so low. Over the past two weeks the number of people who do not believe in the success of his policy has increased from 37 to 47 percent.

Last week's polls revealed that residents of the Russian and Ukrainian capitals have approximately the same attitude to the economic situation: Some 68-70 percent are dissatisfied with their life, and 33-34 percent of people believe that it is "impossible to endure" the present prices. But there are appreciable differences in support for their leader. Some 51 percent of Kiev residents believe in the success of L. Kravchuk's economic policy, while just 20 percent do not.

Those polled mentioned more than 30 names among the politicians who inspire the greatest confidence. The leaders among them are: B. Yeltsin with 29.1 percent, A. Rutskoy with 9 percent, Ye. Gaydar with 4.2 percent, G. Popov with 3.7 percent, R. Khasbulatov with 2.3 percent, A. Sobchak with 2.1 percent, and M. Gorbachev with 1.6 percent.

The situation in Kiev with regard to "trust-mistrust" of Ukraine's present politicians is different: Some 55 percent of Kiev residents mentioned the names of those whom they trust, and just 22 percent believe in no one. Among the politicians who inspire the greatest confidence in the people of Kiev 16 names were mentioned. In the lead are L. Kravchuk with 48.4 percent, Chornovil with 7.9 percent, and Grinev with 1.2 percent.

Let us remind you that B. Yeltsin's personal rating hardly changed "outwardly" in February: Some 42 percent of Muscovites took an unequivocally positive view of the Russian president. Manifestly negative assessments accounted for 11-13 percent. The Russian president's rating fell noticeably during the first two weeks of March: The number of unequivocally positive assessments fell to 34 percent, while the number of unequivocally negative assessments increased to 16 percent.

A. Rutskoy's positions have evidently begun to strengthen recently, for his growing rating points to this. Among Muscovites the number who take an unequivocally positive view of A. Rutskoy increased from 17 percent on 13 February to 23 percent on 12 March.

At the same time simulation modeling has shown that the hopes of those who are gambling on a "confrontation" between B. Yeltsin and A. Rutskoy are not being justified: In the mass consciousness Russia's two political leaders complement each other.

The closer 17 March comes, the more debate there is over the unexpected initiative of certain deputies of the former USSR to convene the Sixth Extraordinary Congress and to restore the USSR. A repeat poll of Muscovites showed that the number of congress "supporters" fell 3 percent during last week, while the number of "opponents" increased from 47 to 56 percent. The ratio of "opponents" to "supporters" now stands at 2.4:1 in Moscow and at 2.9:1 in Kiev.

As an analysis shows, the number of those who unequivocally declare that they will go to the 17 March rally stands at 2-2.5 percent. Of these, 1.9 percent will be made up of congress "supporters," who will predominate at the rally. Both the participants in this political act and the initiators of it, however, will come up against this complexity—the movement to convene the Sixth Congress of USSR People's Deputies and to restore the USSR has no leaders. This is how Muscovites answered the question "which of the well-known initiators and supporters of convening the Sixth Congress of People's Deputies of the former USSR do you trust?":

Know no one —34 percent
Trust none of them—41 percent
Trust... (mentioning a name)—3 percent
Hard to say—22 percent

The following were named among the initiators of the Sixth Congress who inspire confidence in Muscovites: Alksnis with 0.6 percent, A. Makashov with 0.5 percent, S. Umalatova with 0.3 percent, N. Ryzhkov with 0.2 percent, and A. Krayko with 0.2 percent. It is interesting to note that even among those Muscovites who support the idea of the congress 34 percent "know none of the leaders," 16 percent "trust none of them," and just 5 percent were able to mention the leaders' names.

This indicates that the 17 March rally unites not so much supporters of particular politicians as supporters of an idea common to them.

Nuclear Power Safety Record in 1991 Summed Up

PM1703140592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 11 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Candidate of Technical Sciences Yuriy Rogozhin report, followed by Andrey Illesh commentary: "Nuclear Electric Power Stations: There Were No Serious Accidents"]

[Text] Over the past two years IZVESTIYA has constantly published summaries of incidents at nuclear power stations. Naturally, it has provided its own commentaries on the official summary. This possibility does not exist now: With the collapse of the Union structures responsible for the operation of AES's [nuclear electric power stations], unified control over all the stations on the territory of the former USSR has disappeared. Today we offer readers the last full summary. It contains the results for last year. So, there were 45 AES reactor units operation on the territory of the USSR (not counting research reactors and critical and subcritical test beds) in 1991. The safe performance of work at the stations was supervised by the USSR State Committee for Safety in Industry and Atomic Power Industry. Its successor on the territory of the Russian Federation is now, as of the end of 1991, the Russian Federation Gosatomnadzor [State Committee for the Supervision of Nuclear and Radiation Safety].

So, last year there was a restriction in effect on the permissible capacity (70 percent of the nominal) for AES's with first-generation RMBK-1000 [as published] reactors. At the beginning of this year the first reactor unit of the Leningrad AES was excluded from their number by decision of the Russian Federation Gosatomnadzor. This was because work had been carried out to improve safety. In Russia the capacity of three reactor units with RMBK-1000's has been restricted now (the first two units at the Kursk AES and the second one at the Leningrad AES).

The total number of unplanned stoppages increased—by 3 percent—compared with 1990. According to the data of supervisory organs, the statistics with regard to stoppages appear as follows:

Nuclear stations	Number of units	Stoppages
VVER [water-cooled, water-moderated reactor] reactors:		
Balakovo	3	50
Zaporozhye	5	47
Kalinin	2	16
Kola	4	22
Novovoronezhskiy	3	15
Rovno	3	29
Khmelnitskiy	1	6
South Ukraine	3	15
RMBK Reactors:		
Ignalina	2	7
Kursk	4	11
Leningrad	4	11
Smolensk	3	16
Chernobyl	3	10
Other Type Reactors:		
Beloyarskiy	1	5
Bilibino	4	10
Total	45	270

In 1991 there were three radiation accidents (two local and one localized [dve mestnyye i odna lokalnaya]) at Soviet AES's.

On 4 May, owing to the unsatisfactory organization of work (a violation of the sequence of startup and adjustment work—violation—in the "hot cave"), three workers in the second reactor unit of the Ignalina AES received doses of external radiation in excess of the maximum permissible annual dose. (IZVESTIYA commented on the report on that incident).

On 10 July, also owing to a violation of the procedure for carrying out work with radioactive waste, premises and part of the AES territory were polluted during technological transport operations in the first reactor unit of the Bilibino AES.

On 10 August approximately 100 cubic meters of radioactive water flowed out into premises while repair work was being carried out in the second reactor unit of the Chernobyl AES.

Among the other incidents it is possible to single out a serious accident at the Chernobyl AES, which occurred 11 October. Let us recall the situation. It had been decided to halt the second reactor unit of the Chernobyl AES for repairs. For this the supply of steam to the turbine had been shut off, but it continued to spin out of inertia, together with the generator. The switch unexpectedly functioned, and the turbogenerator began to receive energy from the network, gathering momentum in an electric motor regime not envisaged for it. Owing to the tremendous thermodynamic loads, the gaskets were destroyed, and hydrogen escaped from the generator cooling system causing a fire in the machine room entailing considerable damage. There was no radiation impact on the environment. An investigation established that the accident was caused by a short circuit in a cable governing the actions of the high-voltage mains switch.

This was the result: In 1991 there were no nuclear accidents or accidents accompanied by pollution of the population's habitat at AES's located on the territory of the USSR. [Rogozhin ends]

The last sentence in the commentary on the safety of our AES's is evidently meant to reassure the reader, who to this day remains under the impression of Chernobyl. Indeed, there were no emergencies similar to the worst nuclear accident of the 20th century. Moreover, it is planned to modernize reactor units at many stations which cause specialists anxiety, or modernization has already been carried out. We will not now discuss whether such "cosmetic" work on our nuclear power generation is sufficient. We are talking of something else. With the breakup of the USSR, many bureaucratic Union structures have gone—which in itself can only be welcomed. But, with the nuclear breakup, it must be remembered that nothing here can be postponed until tomorrow. This primarily applies to everything connected with safety and **permanent nondepartmental control**. Alas, it is very difficult today to speak of order or constant principles in monitoring the safe working of AES's. Just as everywhere else, a dangerous vacuum has arisen with the changing of structures, and the cadres themselves—specialists in supervision—also have familiar problems: low labor remuneration and so on. People depart, leaving the AES's to their own devices. As yet this process has not caused an explosion. As yet...

Here is another extremely important point: The tremendous shortage of electricity on the territory of the former Union in general and simply the energy crisis in certain republics will undoubtedly lead to the maximum utilization of AES capacities. In this situation it is necessary to be extremely thorough and not allow economic interests to be placed above questions of the safe operation of reactor units. Above all, those of obsolete types. There is also talk of recommissioning stations which were closed down recently, particularly the Armenian one. The idea strikes specialists as sensible, but the commissioning deadline as unrealistic. All sorts of violations are possible in a race—let's do it more quickly! Even violations which it will be impossible to rectify later.

Media

Fate of Moscow Press Outside Russia Viewed

PM1703155792 Moscow TRUD in Russian 17 Mar 92 p 2

[E. Baybakpayev and B. Leonov article: "Key Press. How Fate of Former Central Press Is Taking Shape in CIS"]

[Text] The fate of the press, above all that of the former central newspapers, is difficult and unpredictable. They are now under Russian jurisdiction, but still enjoy the interest and trust of millions of subscribers in the former republics of the former USSR that are now sovereign states. For instance, more than 4 million citizens of the independent states subscribe to TRUD alone outside Russia. Naturally, they are interested in whether they will continue to be able to obtain information from their chosen newspapers, for which they have "voted" with their hard-earned rubles. Will they have the prospect of paying for "their" publications with hryvnya, talers, lits, or lei?

Obviously, the future of the so-called "big press" is bound to concern the leaders of the sovereign states. Although it is not a question of daily bread, but only of spiritual nourishment, this still concerns the interests of citizens which their elected rulers have pledged to defend. Moreover, at present these publications alone are capable of providing the reader with more objective information—without a Caucasian, Central Asian, Ukrainian, or other "slant"—about what is going on in various regions. And reporting on the difficult birth of the unprecedented reforms in Russia, whose new policy may arouse approval, regret, or condemnation, but not indifference from members of various population groups.

Needless to say, the heads of the various sovereign states do not have the same attitude to the "Moscow press." Some react to it in the same way as VOA broadcasts were viewed in recent times on Old Square or at the Lubyanka—protecting their subordinates with might and main from "pernicious foreign influence."

Others, although they sometimes have to swallow the bitter pill of criticism from newspapers, are perfectly well aware that coverage of their policy and actions—even if they do not always see it as objective—is more beneficial than simply no mention. While often disputing various press statements, they are not trying to bury the press, but preserve a unified information area.

The Russian president is trying with his usual vigor to weaken the monopolies' economic stranglehold that is increasingly tightening around the throat of KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA, TRUD, and other mass publications. Although implementation of his decree on additional measures to provide the press with economic and legal protection is, as expected, being sabotaged at various levels, we would like to believe that B.N. Yeltsin will keep his word to "stand up for the press" and will help preserve it for millions of subscribers.

President A.A. Akayev of Kyrgyzstan, who invited the leaders of the central newspapers and their own correspondents in this republic to Bishkek for a "roundtable," resolutely advocated preserving a single information area. Addressing journalists, President Akayev argued his case extremely convincingly:

"In our struggle to survive and lead a good life, we need allies," he said. "Allies at state and party level, and at the level of the press—the autonomous political force of the day. Therefore we want to establish far closer and more constructive cooperation with you than was previously the case and work out a model for cooperation."

President Akayev's concern that the sphere of the Russian printed word—a word that was "not only word, but also action. A political cause, a matter of interethnic accord and civic peace"—is shrinking inexorably, was seen as sincere.

With the printruns of the former central publications being reduced to zero the citizens of sovereign Kyrgyzstan, who have not as yet mastered other foreign languages apart from Russian, are indeed being deprived of a chance not only to read fairly full information about events outside the republic, but also to acquaint themselves in Russian newspapers and journals with the achievements of world culture and science.

Following the breakup of the USSR the former central newspapers have begun to "transgress" by providing one-sided information. Newspapers are primarily filled with news from Russia. This reproach from the president is quite fair, just as his explanation of the situation is fair: The bulk of their subscribers and readers live in Russia. A.A. Akayev's opinion is incontrovertible when he says that this information vacuum will be filled by a "general Turkic-Asian newspaper, whose functions will most likely be assumed by one of the newspapers in a state in the region or, quite possibly, by any one of the Turkish newspapers; you only have to change our alphabet from Cyrillic to the Latin alphabet."

No one could tell us the point of changing the alphabet. Is it really a case of Turkey in return supplying all the republic's printing houses and publishing houses with modern equipment and injecting its currency into television and radio channels? We are sure that in that case you would not get away with just changing the alphabet.

We did not learn about the attitude of the republic's inhabitants, just over half of whom are of the indigenous nationality. They will hardly remember their forebears writing and reading Latin script in the past. It is unlikely that the Russian-speaking population would back the introduction of a new alphabet. That would most likely spur on the migration process that has already intensified over the last few years. President Akayev will also take resolute steps against this, stressing once again at a meeting with journalists that there can be no question of flouting the "rights of ethnic minorities in Kyrgyzstan," where a rule-of-law civil society is being formed.

The question of the incipient information vacuum on the territory of the former republics is more than topical. If the breakup of the single economic area is supplemented by the destruction of the single information area, the sovereign states' total isolation from one another will be assured. Who stands to gain from this? No one! Apart from certain politicians interested in "one-way" glasnost, in measuring out information. The intention of the leaders of a number of independent states that support the Commonwealth to prevent information isolation and "provide entry visas" allowing the "Moscow press" and "Central Television" to enter their territory is consonant with the interests of these states themselves and their citizens, who have a right to expect guaranteed access to their preferred sources of information. It is foolish, to say the least, to assess this as "toying with the press." It is paradoxical, but in the present conditions the drop in circulation and the number of subscribers is beneficial for the press because this means a drop in the losses sustained in newspaper production.

So, the problem of a single information area is dominated not so much by political as economic considerations. It is no coincidence that President Akayev emphasized that our cooperation must be of mutual benefit. We must join together in seeking economic levers for this cooperation.

Will this mean preferential taxes on the printing and circulation of "Moscow publications"? Or the new forms of advertizing that A.A. Akayev mentioned? And what compensation can there be for the uncontrollable price hikes for Russian paper? The question of the status of "central" newspapers' own correspondents in the former republics and of social and other guarantees is now arising in all its magnitude, along with that of the volume of publications from these regions...

We would like to believe that these questions will not be left off the agenda of the conference of the sovereign states' presidents in Kiev. At any rate President Akayev has promised journalists that he will voice his disquiet there regarding the impending information isolation that will complicate the resolution of both economic and Army problems.

TASS Carries Press Review for 18 Mar

LD1803113292 Moscow TASS in English 1051 GMT 18 Mar 92

[Text] Moscow March 18 TASS—Newspapers highlight today the situation in the hotbeds of tension. KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA reports the continuing fighting in various parts of the Dnestr Republic. Armed clashes between the Moldovan special police force and the Dnestr guards claimed the lives of 30 people from both sides this March. According to the newspaper, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk issued a decree about the protection of the Ukrainian-Moldovan border, because "the conflict in Moldova is expanding beyond the Moldovan borders". In accordance with the decree, a buffer zone is being created along the border with Moldova, its special status is being worked out and troops are being moved there.

"Refugees from the Dnestr region streamed to southern Ukraine because of instability there", KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA points out. The Ukrainian-Moldova border has been closed, started from today, in order to restrain the flow of refugees. The 14th Army, deployed in Moldova, believes that "the threat of an open and senseless war is becoming real... If this happens, the Army does not intend to remain aloof. The military will have to defend themselves, their families, the people arms in hand."

All newspapers report the "Sixth Congress of the USSR People's Deputies", held in the House of Culture of the Voronovo state farm, in the Moscow region, for an hour and a half by candlelight, as well as a rally at the Manezh Square in Moscow, which was held "tranquilly, without incidents". ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA describes the congress as "a forum of those who are eternally in the past". KRASNAYA ZVEZDA comments on it in the following way: "A year ago we were deciding the destiny of the Union at the referendum. Now there is neither the Union, nor unity in society."

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA carries the text of the federal treaty, which divides the authority and prerogatives between the federal bodies of power and those of the republics, integrated in the Russian Federation. The document has already been initialled by 18 out of 20 republics, integrated in the Russian Federation.

Ramzan Abdulatipov, chairman of the Council of Nationalities of the Russian parliament, visited Tatarstan on the eve of the referendum there, which is evoking dubious feelings in the Russian Federation. His assessment of the situation in the republic is more optimistic. He said in an interview with ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA that "in my opinion, the most important result of our trip to Tatarstan is that we have managed to preserve the integrity of Russia. There emerged a possibility to conclude a treaty on the division of authority".

Colonel General Viktor Samsonov, chief of the General Staff of the CIS Allied Armed Forces, described in an interview the situation in the Transcaucasian Military District as "extremely complicated". Assessing the situation, he said that it would probably develop towards "the growth of confrontation and lead, in the long run, to an armed clash between Armenia and Azerbaijan without any reservations". The general spoke about the legal uncertainty, from which the Army is the first to suffer. "We have neither a defence law, nor a law about the status of servicemen, nor effective regulations on the order of military service", he pointed out.

Colonel General Boris Pyankov, deputy commander-in-chief of the CIS Allied Armed Forces, said on March 13, addressing the Russian parliament, that "the Armenian and Azeri sides are resolving political problems in Nagorno-Karabakh mostly by military means, and this trend is being intensified. Units of the CIS Armed Forces, of the Transcaucasian Military District are being increasingly drawn into those developments". According to Pyankov, units and facilities of the CIS Armed Forces were attacked and brought under fire 127 times in 1991. Eighteen servicemen were killed. This year the CIS troops were attacked and brought under fire 112 times, and 16 servicemen were killed.

ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA carries a statement of scientists from the Russian nuclear centre, connected with the decision of Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk to suspend the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from Ukraine and to create on its territory an international nuclear centre for their dismantling. The scientists are protesting emphatically against those actions. They regard as impermissible the organisation of the dismantling of nuclear weapons in Ukraine and urge the president to give up those plans, primarily in the interests of his own people.

The newspaper reports the creation of the CIS Supreme Court of Arbitration, which will ensure equal protection of the interests of industrial enterprises in the whole of the new Commonwealth. According to the newspaper, heads of national banks of the CIS member states agreed to pursue a coordinated financial policy. With this in view they intend to create a coordinating authority.

International Affairs

Kozyrev Visits China, Meets With Qian Qichen

LD1603151692 Moscow TASS in English 1456 GMT 16 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Vladimir Kashirov and Georgiy Shmelyov]

[Text] Beijing, March 16 TASS—Russia is ready to negotiate a global zero variant for tactical nuclear weapons and to think over the idea of refusing to deploy, on mutual agreement, certain types of tactical nuclear weapons in those border areas which are the subject of talks on confidence-building measures and arms cuts, visiting Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev told his Chinese counterpart Qian Qichen during a three-hour meeting on Monday [16 March].

The ministers outlined the prospects for further talks between the two countries on border problems and on arms cuts and confidence-building measures in the area.

They agreed there are big possibilities to develop Russian-Chinese economic relations in various spheres and stated that a good impact to the dialogue between the two countries was given by a meeting of Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Chairman of the State Council of China Li Peng in New York last January.

Kozyrev welcomed the Chinese decision to join the nuclear Non- Proliferation Treaty, while Qian Qichen stressed the importance of the latest Russian disarmament initiatives.

Both ministers welcomed the recent positive changes in world developments, the end of confrontation, the practical elimination of the threat of nuclear war and the fact that most states switched to realism in international politics.

Russia and China can be more active in cooperating with the Asian-Pacific countries and "bring additional stability to the region," the ministers agreed.

The problem of Taiwan was also in the focus of discussion. Kozyrev reiterated the Russian official position concerning the island. However, he noted that Russia intends to develop its relations with Taiwan on the non-governmental basis. "The forms, the character and the level of Russian cooperation with the island will correspond to the practice used by most of other states," Kozyrev said.

The ministers briefed each other on reforms implemented in both countries, paying a special attention to human rights protection. "The creation of a civilised society in the Russian Federation is impossible without full protection of human rights. With this in view we try to use international mechanisms and promote, to a certain extent, interference into our internal affairs," Kozyrev said. He added Russia meets with sympathy the growing activities of international institutions in human rights protection as it believes any country would only profit from that. Taking such a stand, "Russia is guided by its own internal interests."

On Tuesday [17 March] Kozyrev will meet with Li Peng.

Talks With PRC Officials

LD1703133592 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0830 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Vladimir Kashirov and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Beijing, 17 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Relations between Russia and China are assuming priority precedence in our country's foreign policy, stated Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev at a meeting with journalists today after a two-day official visit to the PRC.

He noted that the current trip was "the first visit by a foreign minister of the new Russia to China," during which there had been substantive conversations and talks with PRC State Council Premier Li Peng and PRC Foreign Minister Qian Qichen. A. Kozyrev stressed that the dialogue in the Chinese capital was "marked by the contacts which have taken place previously, and primarily by the brief but extremely full meeting between Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin and PRC State Council Premier Li Peng in New York this past January." The meeting, in the minister's words, "set the tone for good-neighborly, smooth, and normal relations between the two great powers."

The minister reported that the invitation to the Russian president to make an official visit to the PRC had been confirmed in the conversation with the head of the Chinese Government. The sides also had exchanged ratification documents on an agreement concerning the eastern section of the Russian-Chinese border. In the view of A. Kozyrev and Li Peng, this document is of "fundamental significance for the creation of a solid legal base for the immense Russian-Chinese border."

The Russian minister sees the strengthening of guarantees in international law for Russia's borders as an extremely important task. Unfortunately, he said, we have still not fully resolved this problem, which we inherited from the Soviet Union, although "many useful things" recently have been done in this area: A new treaty was signed recently with Finland to confirm the western border, and border issues now have been normalized overall with China. "On the agenda today is a peace treaty with Japan," A. Kozyrev continued, "although we should not rush here; we will have to tackle this problem, including a final territorial settlement."

The minister believes that Russia's relations with China, as with other major powers in the East, are gaining priority importance in the Russian Federation's foreign policy. It is a case here of establishing good-neighborly relations and developing cooperation in all spheres: political, economic, trade, scientific and technical, and cultural. He stressed that in his conversations in Beijing both sides showed an understanding of the need to build their foreign policies "pushing off from domestic reforms." A. Kozyrev pointed out that Russia is to work in the long term on preparing "a major treaty-type agreement that could be signed at the summit level."

The minister reported that he had informed the Chinese side that Russia's disarmament initiatives, in particular the announced reduction of the armed forces by 700,000 men, relates to reductions in this region to a significant extent. He stressed that the so-called "retargeting of nuclear weapons" and the other arms reduction initiatives on which Russia is conducting talks with the United States and other Western countries will not lead to an increase of military potential or to a military threat in the East; on the contrary, it will promote the strengthening of security in this region as well. This clarification was met with understanding by the Chinese side, which gave a positive appraisal of Russia's disarmament initiatives.

Speaking about the new model for relations with China, A. Kozyrev noted that it includes elements of continuity and cooperation for the sides as guarantors for the strengthening of stability in various regions of the world. The minister pointed out that a final settlement in Cambodia and opposition to extremism and terrorism are possible spheres for cooperation between Russia and China.

Russia's relations with Taiwan are an example of its pragmatic approach. They should develop on a nongovernmental basis, and the character of these relations should be in line with the practice of relations with the island as maintained by the majority of other states. They should not cause "political damage" to ties with China.

Nor was such a "fairly acute and, to a certain extent, contentious issue as human rights" bypassed in the talks, the minister pointed out. A difference between the two countries' approaches to this problem was noted frankly. Russia is in favor of developing international cooperation on issues of control in the sphere of human rights, considering that "human rights and democratic institutions are part and parcel of our reforms. That is why we, out of our own considerations for the building of democracy, are interested in developing international cooperation." China, he said, maintains the concept of noninterference in internal affairs with which we are familiar from previous years, and human rights issues are subordinate to this concept. The sides, however, uphold a single view that interstate relations between the two powers should develop, first and foremost, in the interests of political and economic stability. Elements of "essential accord are combined here with a difference in approaches to certain quite significant issues, but this is done without excessive dramatization or confrontation," Andrey Kozyrev said in conclusion.

Arrives in South Korea

LD1703181592 Moscow TASS in English 1620 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By TASS-ITAR special correspondents Ivan Zakharchenko and Georgiy Shmelyov]

[Text] Seoul, March 17 TASS—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev arrived here today on an official visit on board a special plane from Beijing.

During his three-day Seoul visit, Kozyrev will meet Republican President No Tae-u and hold negotiations with Foreign Minister Yi Sang-ok to discuss aspects of bilateral relations, including trade and economic matters, as well as topical international issues of mutual interest.

The negotiations will consider the current situation on the Korean Peninsula and in the Asia-Pacific region. The Russian and South Korean foreign ministers will sign a consular convention and a memorandum on mutual understanding on visa issues.

Begins Talks

LD1803021792 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0115 GMT 18 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Ivan Zakharchenko and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Seoul, 18 Mar (TASS)—Russian-South Korean talks started at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea today. Heads of the foreign departments, Andrey Kozyrev and Yi Sang-ok, are discussing a number of bilateral relations issues and exchanging opinions on issues of the current situation in the Korean Peninsula and in the Asian Pacific region and on topical international subjects.

Greeting the Soviet guest, Yi Sang-ok said that "we welcome the first visit by the Russian foreign minister" to the Republic of Korea. He expressed confidence that the present stay by Andrey Kozyrev in Seoul and the talks which were held here would be fruitful and assist in strengthening friendship and cooperation between the two states.

Andrey Kozyrev arrived in Seoul on Tuesday [17 March] evening on a three- day official visit while making a tour around Asian countries.

Signs Documents

LD1803054192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0235 GMT 18 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Ivan Zakharchenko and Georgiy Shmelev]

[Text] Seoul, 18 Mar (TASS)—By signing a consular convention and memorandum of understanding on visa matters, talks between Andrey Kozyrev and Yi Sang-ok, foreign ministers of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Korea, respectively, finished here today. These documents place legal basis under Russian-South Korean consular relations and this allows more effective protection of legal interests of the citizens of the two countries on each other's territory. The convention and memorandum simplify considerably the existing procedure of granting visas and ultimately are called upon to assist in expanding bilateral cooperation and exchanges and in strengthening friendship between the Russian and Korean peoples. The establishment of diplomatic relations between Moscow and Seoul at the end of September 1990 gave rise to boosting ties between the two countries. The number of trips and visits between them has grown considerably. For example, last year the consular section of the Russian Embassy in Seoul granted more than 17,000 visas to the citizens of the Republic of Korea, while in 1990—6,000.

Further on Kozyrev Visit

WA1803165092

For South Korean reportage on the visit by Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev to ROK, including reports on his meetings and talks with ROK President No Tae-u and Foreign Minister Yi Sang-ok, please see the South Korea section of the 18 March East Asia DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Japanese Prime Minister Cited on Possible Loan

OW1403160292 Tokyo KYODO in English 1502 GMT 14 Mar 92

[Text] Moscow, March 14 KYODO—Japanese Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa has indicated a "large loan" to Russia if the two countries settle their territorial dispute, a major Russian newspaper reported Saturday [14 March].

"The Japanese Government would be able to provide a big loan if the territorial issue is resolved and a peace treaty is reached between the two countries," Miyazawa was quoted as saying by the NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA.

He also hinted that Japan is prepared to take a flexible stance in negotiations on terms, timing, and methods of the proposed return of four islands off Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido, seized by the Soviet troops immediately after Japan's World War II surrender in 1945.

The prime minister also tried to ease anxieties over the rights of Russians who live on the islands, including in regard to assets.

"Japan will assure that (Russian islanders) will not suffer the same fate as former Japanese islanders who were expelled by force without receiving any compensation," he said.

He called on the Russian Government to honor the 1956 Japan- Soviet joint declaration in which Moscow promised to return two of the four islands, Shikotan and the Habomai group of islets, upon conclusion of a bilateral peace pact.

The document does not mention the two larger islands, Etorofu and Kunashiri.

The 1956 declaration was disregarded by Moscow after the signing of the Japan-U.S. security treaty that tied Tokyo and Washington in a stronger joint military alliance.

Miyazawa urged the Russian Government as the legitimate successor of the former Soviet Government to honor the declaration, noting Russia has confirmed it would honor the Soviet Union's international treaties and obligations.

He also tried to dispel concern among some Russian officials that Japan may expand its territorial demands to the whole Kuril chain of islands.

"What Japan is demanding to get is only the four islands, not the whole Kuril chain," he said.

All of the Kurils and Sakhalin Island were Japanese territory before World War II.

The prime minister underlined hopes that this year's planned string of high-level exchanges—mutual visits by Russian and Japanese foreign ministers and a Japan trip by Russian President Boris Yeltsin—will lead to a marked progress in the lengthy dispute over the territories.

Yeltsin is expected to go to Tokyo in September, while Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev is scheduled to visit Japan from March 19 to 22.

Japanese Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe is expected to visit Russia in early May, according to Japanese Government sources.

Addresses Letter to Yeltsin

LD1703195192 Moscow TASS in English 1530 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Kopnov]

[Text] Tokyo, March 17 TASS—"Japan hopes that a peace treaty will be concluded with Russia shortly, ushering in a new era in bilateral relations," says a personal message addressed by Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa on Monday [16 March] to Russian President Boris Yeltsin in reply to his previous letter.

Reporters were told today by secretary-general of the Japanese Cabinet of Ministers Koichi Kato that Miyazawa expressed in the letter his hope that during the forthcoming Boris Yeltsin's visit to Tokyo this September, the sides would discuss seriously the "Northern Territories" issue, which remains the biggest roadblock to the development of Japanese-Russian relations since the end of the Second World War. The letter also thanks the Russian president for his expressed readiness to approach the solution of the territorial issue on the basis of "legality and fairness".

"I hope," Miyazawa stresses in his letter, "that we shall be able to conclude a peace treaty as quickly as possible and to usher in a new Japanese-Russian era".

The Japanese prime minister also highly assesses the results of his meeting with the Russian president in New York this January. He believes it marked "the first step to the establishment of personal relations" between the leaders of the two states. Moreover, he expressed support to the economic reforms now under way in Russia.

Lech Walesa's Visit Canceled; No Date Set

OW1703141892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1252 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Report by correspondent Mikhail Mayorov from "Diplomatic Panorama"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The visit to Russia by President Lech Walesa of Poland scheduled for this month will not take place, spokesman for Russia's Foreign Ministry Oleg Brykin told DP's ["Diplomatic Panorama"] correspondent. According to him, this was no "demarche" on the part of Warsaw, since "a Russo-Polish summit was not planned for March officially". "The two sides only conducted negotiations on the possible timing of a visit by Poland's President to Moscow, but a concrete agreement was not reached", the diplomat said.

As Russian Foreign Ministry officials made it clear, the lack of clarity as to the time of the proposed visit is due to the fact that during their upcoming meeting B. Yeltsin and L. Walesa intend to sign a number of documents which are not quite coordinated yet. The main difficulty faced by Moscow and Warsaw lies in the need to work out a compromise on mutual settlements connected with the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Poland. "This is the problem the two sides are discussing now", O. Brykin said.

According to him, the discussions aim to satisfy the claims of both sides. Poland insists that it should be compensated for the ecological damage done as a result of the Soviet servicemen's stay on its soil. As for Russia, it believes that the cost of the immovable property the troops are leaving behind should be taken into account.

The corresponding protocol has not been finalized yet, and without it the bilateral agreement on the withdrawal of troops from Poland it's a part of cannot come into force", O. Brykin explained.

Polish Minister Skubuszewski on Foreign Ties

LD1703230192 Moscow TASS in English 1957 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladas Burbulis]

[Text] Warsaw, March 17 TASS—"An extremely significant element of Poland's foreign policy is its relations with the East, and most importantly with Russia," Polish Foreign Minister, Krzysztof Skubiszewski, said in his report on the international situation of the country at the meeting of the Sejm commissin on foreign affairs. In our contacts with the Russian Federation we intend to proceed with "the problem of resolving the withdrawal of the Northern Group of troops frm the Polish territory," the minister pointed out.

According to Skubiszewski, one of the most vital tasks of the foreign ministry is to carry out a policy which would guarantee to all Poles living abroad equal rights with the native population. "It also concerns our compatriots living beyond the Eastern borders of Poland whom we should help to restore their intellectual potential and strengthen their ties with the motherland."

Poland's European commitments are a top priority for Warsaw, Skubiszewski stressed. In the first place it concerns economic, defense and political integration of Poland into the European Community structures with the aim of ensuring security of the republic. He stressed that the Foreign Ministry of Poland attaches considerable importance to the development of cooperation to ensure stability and security in Europe.

Ministry Issues Statement on Central America

LD1703202192 Moscow TASS in English 1858 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Moscow, March 17 TASS—Russia is ready to support efforts to normalise the situation in Central America, a Russian Foreign Ministry statement released today said.

The statement welcomed positive changes in Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala, stressing that international assistance to the government and rebels in El Salvador will promote the fulfilment of obligations by both sides.

The Russian Foreign Ministry expressed concern about worsening relations between Honduras and El Salvador, which may further destabilise the situation in the region.

Russia calls on the governments of these countries to settle the conflict by political means, the statement said.

Gamsakhurdia Holds Soviet Session in Groznyy

LD1703021492 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 16 Mar 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] As is known, a session of the Georgian Supreme Soviet has been held in Groznyy under the chairmanship of President Gamsakhurdia. It is also known that in the period of its work in Tbilisi the parliament's membership numbered 137 people, of them 74 members of parliament took part in the session's work in the town of Groznyy. The president's decree on recognition of the independence of the Chechen Republic was approved by parliament. A delegation from the Azerbaijan Popular Front welcomed the session's work. Evaluating the Georgian situation, President Gamsakhurdia said the following in an interview:

[Begin Gamsakhurdia recording] Is there a future for Shevardnadze? I can say with all responsibility that there is no future for him because the people did not designate him, the people did not elect him, and he is struggling against the authorities elected by the people, against the democratic system. [end recording]

Khasbulatov Receives Arab Union Delegation

OW1803050392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1602 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In Moscow Tuesday [17 March], head of the Russian parliament Ruslan Khasbulatov received a delegation from the Inter-parliamentary Arab Union. Greeting his guests, Khasbulatov said that the parliaments of Commonwealth States will form an inter-parliamentary assembly, the "Commonwealth Assembly."

He said the Russian parliament contribute its share to peace-keeping processes. [sentence as received]

The Arab parliamentarians representing Morocco, Egypt, Yemen, and Tunisia, proposed that the Russian parliament create a committee on Russian-Arab friendship.

More on Rutskoy on CIS Troops' Withdrawal

PM1703151192 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Mar 92 p 3

[Major A. Stasovskiy report: "Russian Vice President A. Rutskoy: Troop Withdrawal From Transcaucasus Should Proceed Unconditionally and in the Very Near Future"]

[Text] Before leaving for their duty station, Lieutenant Colonel V. Reshetnikov, commander of an antiaircraft missile brigade, and his deputy Lt. Col. V. Kovbasyuk, both of whom were held for a ransom by Armenian gunmen only recently, were received in his office by Major General of Aviation Aleksandr Rutskoy, vice president of the Russian Federation. Maj. Gen. of Aviation Nikolay Stolyarov, assistant to the commander in chief and chairman of the Committee for Work with CIS Joint Armed Forces Personnel, attended the meeting.

The Russian vice president thanked the officers for their courage and tenacity, and for their devotion to military duty. He said all servicemen who had been seized as hostages will be recommended for decoration.

During his conversation with the officers from the antiaircraft missile brigade, A. Rutskoy paid a great deal of attention to the current situation of CIS Joint Armed Forces in the "hot spots." In particular, he said:

"I believe that the withdrawal of troops from the Transcaucasus and Moldova should proceed unconditionally and in the very near future. Moreover, units should not be withdrawn in the same way as the 366th Regiment was withdrawn. There must be all types of guarantees and, if necessary, there should also be aviation back-up.

"I think the withdrawal will need to be carried out within two to two-and-a-half weeks. To do this, it is important to prepare transport aircraft to bring out servicemen's families first and foremost and to vacate sanatoriums and rest homes for them.

"I discussed all of these questions over the telephone with Russian President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin," A. Rutskoy went on, "and met with understanding and support on his part. When he returns from vacation we will examine all of these questions more concretely. Of course, first it will be necessary to adopt a political statement on the situation in Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Moldova. This statement should take the form of an appeal to the world public, the CIS peoples, and the sovereign state presidents."

Referring to the political situation in the Transcaucasian republics, Rutskoy noted that separatism and national self-interest now dominate the approaches to resolving problems there. Politicians incapable of evaluating the full tragedy of what has happened and of halting the destructive processes have come to power in many place on the crest of this wave: They merely seek to find culprits to blame for these tragic events. Often they use the Army for these purposes.

The vice president stressed: "The time has come to most seriously ask some of the leaders of Commonwealth sovereign states. Why is it that the Army finds itself in such a tragic situation? Why is it that over 350,000 officers and their families are without apartments? And why is it that they have become society's misfits [izgoy], open not only to insult and humiliation, but even to murder?

"The time has also come to call to account all those, for example, who fail to comply with the Russian president's decrees on the social protection of officers and who allow themselves to ignore Russian Supreme Soviet decisions on not using the Armed Forces in interethnic conflicts. They must be made answerable under the full severity of the law.

"I believe that there should be a conference of Commonwealth heads of state to adopt the normative documents creating a legal basis for halting the bloodshed and confrontation on the territory of Commonwealth countries."

Vice President A. Rutskoy paid particular attention to the problem of retrieving arms and ammunition from units and sub-divisions stationed in the Transcaucasus and Moldova. In his opinion, no hardware, weapons, or ammunition should be left behind for sundry gang formations, regardless of the slogans beneath which they hide. The vice president stressed that anything that cannot be retrieved should be destroyed without fail.

To conclude the meeting, Aleksandr Rutskoy asked the officers to tell the personnel of the antiaircraft missile brigade that servicemen in the "hot spots" have not been forgotten, and that there are people doing everything possible to ease the lot of soldiers and officers so that all their aspirations and hopes might materialize in the near future.

In turn, Lt. Col. V. Reshetnikov and Lt. Col. V. Kovbasyuk thanked the Russian vice president for his support, his firmness, and his inflexibility on questions of protecting the Army and servicemen, and for his efforts to give them every possible assistance.

PRC Group Views Military Conversion Prospects

PM1703134792 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 92 First Edition p 8

[Andrey Lapshov report under the "Visits" rubric: "Chinese Kitchen of Russian Conversion"]

[Text] A delegation of the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament visited Russia recently. The purpose of the visit was to ascertain what authority the peacemaking organizations of the CIS have to act in the role of coordinators stabilizing the sociopolitical processes in various regions of the Commonwealth countries. Great attention was devoted to the programs for the conversion of the military economy in Russia and to the prospects for the two countries' business cooperation in this sphere.

China has great experience in carrying out conversion. The Chinese "four modernizations" program was based mainly on the large-scale conversion of military production facilities. This largely conditioned the success of the radical economic reforms in China.

Dutch Military Adviser Visits Kama Region

LD1703194692 Moscow TASS in English 1501 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Leonid Bogdatyev]

[Text] Perm, March 17 TASS—Perm officials welcomed for the first time on Tuesday [17 March] Dutch military adviser Storm van Gravesande.

At a meeting with the military administration, city and regional authorities, General Gravesande said he arrived in the Kama region because of his interest in the way army and military industrial circles view problems involved in arms reduction, the restructuring of the armed forces in Russia and their switch to the control of the Russian president.

The guest from Amsterdam named several Dutch firms which could help build housing for officers in Perm.

Russian Relations With Muslim Republics Eyed

PM1703110792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 11 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 6

[Article by Professor Aleksey Vasilyev, deputy director of the Russian Academy of Sciences Africa Institute: "Russia and the Muslim World—Partners or Opponents?"]

[Text] Russia's foreign policy is now being shaped under the influence of two opposing groupings which reflect in a conventional manner the internal polarization of Russian society. One grouping, which may conventionally be called the "Atlanticists," advocates the maximum, speediest rapprochement with the West and the establishment of relations as an ally with the United States. They now fear Iran as the focus of "Islamic fundamentalism." The other group, which reflects neo-Bolshevik trends, calls for the maximum distancing from the West and is even ready to return to the self-defeating confrontation with the West, which is destructive to Russia. At present it is in the minority, and only the very hypothetical success of a neo-Bolshevik coup can lend force to the voices of its supporters.

There are, however, many dangers inherent in identifying the interests of Russia with those of the United States. One of these is the threat to Russia's positions in the Muslim world with regard to "nearby foreign parts"—the new independent states in the south of the former USSR. Previously the axis of confrontation on a global scale lay between NATO and the Warsaw Pact Organization, or between the West and the East, or between western civilization and its illegitimate child—communist pseudocivilization. A new axis of tension is now becoming apparent, namely North-South or, in other words, between the West and the Muslim world above all. Russia could also find itself drawn into this confrontation. Conflicts in Eurasia are inevitable.

The Eurasian area, which used to be occupied by the Soviet Union and most of which is now occupied by Russia, has traditionally been a zone of cohabitation, interpenetration, and interaction between the Slav (above all, Russian) and Turkic ethnoses, between orthodox [Christians] and Muslims. Russia now has the longest—many thousands of kilometers!—borders of all European countries with the Muslim world.

As in former times, this is a belt of joint habitation of two ethnicities. Conflicts between them, which are inevitable, ought to be translated into a nonviolent form and be resolved by all conceivable means in the interests of the two sides. If conflicts turn into bloody internecine strife, this will mean self-destruction both for Russia and for the Turkic Muslim peoples.

It would be naive in the extreme to expect simply harmonious cohabitation, to expect a pleasant and easy movement toward new forms of cooperation. Both the self-identification of Turkic peoples and the legitimation of their former or new political elites can occur only on two bases—nationalism and Islam. Both of these will evidently take on a definite anti-Russian hue in a short space of time and will become a means of alienating the two ethnicities and of definite estrangement at state level. It is necessary to expect this process and to treat its manifestations without hysteria. It will be natural if the new states take three or four steps away from Russia.

Iranian and Turkish Raisins Compete with Central Asian Raisins

Under these conditions two more powerful neighbors than the newly formed states—Turkey and Iran—are once again, as during many hundreds of years, joining in the struggle for influence. The reestablishment of long-forgotten ties—ethnic, cultural, religious—with their first and second cousins across the Soviet Union's former border is also a natural process. How far it will go is another matter. How strong the influence of these two countries over the southern republics will prove is another matter too. Whereas the linguistic and geographic proximity of Turkey and Azerbaijan ensures greater rapprochement, Central Asia is too remote from Turkey. Iran's geographic proximity can be complemented by influence over the Shiites of Azerbaijan and the limited number of Shiites of Central Asia, and Iran's influence can be underpinned by common ethnic and linguistic roots in Tajikistan.

At present Ankara and Tehran are rivals in the matter of establishing diplomatic ties with the Transcaucasus and Central Asia and are courting the political leaders of the newly created states. Their rivalry has not impeded their joint actions—the admission of a number of Muslim states of the former USSR to the Economic Cooperation Organization, of which Turkey, Iran, and Pakistan are members. It is possible to voice doubts about the actual economic efficacy of that political gesture.

For many decades and, in some cases, hundreds of years, all the economic ties of the southern republics were oriented northward. It is simply impossible to change their direction by the wave of a magic wand. It will require efforts costing many billions [currency not specified] just to build roads to Turkey and Iran, and who will undertake to fund them? The export potentials of the Central Asian and Transcaucasian republics and of Turkey and Iran are not complementary but in competition. Azerbaijani oil or Turkmen gas will hardly be bought by Iran, which is rich in hydrocarbons, and Turkey is at present beyond geographic reach. Moreover, Iranian and Turkish raisins compete with Central Asian raisins...

Therefore forces of attraction with regard to Russia—of an economic nature, above all—will operate in these states in addition to forces of repulsion. It is precisely economic necessity that will make Russia and the new Muslim states take two or three steps toward each other.

It is not only the economy that will determine the future of our relations. Despite all the absurdity of the communist regime, efforts—very vigorous efforts, too—were made to raise the social and cultural level of the population in the former Soviet republics. Even now the level of education and literacy and the number of students per 1,000 inhabitants in these republics are higher than in Turkey and Iran. The local intelligentsia will retain its national pride and traditional ties with Russian centers of science and education after a period of national self-assertion.

The inhabitants of particular republics who have ended up outside their own national states will play a special role in relations among the states of the former Soviet Union. This is one of the key problems, for approximately 65 million people now live outside the borders of their own national republics, more than 25 million Russians live outside Russia, mainly in Ukraine, but many millions also live in Kazakhstan, Central Asia, and the Transcaucasus. Therefore any confrontation with Russia on the part of Kazakhstan, where Russians make up more than one-half the population, or Kyrgyzstan, where they make up almost one-third of the inhabitants, could lead to destructive civil wars. The leaders of these republics are endeavoring to avoid such a development of events.

Obviously, the Russian-speaking population will try to push the new states toward cooperation with Russia. Although the possibility of a mass resettlement of Russians from some of them, following the example of the resettlement of the French from Algeria, should not be ruled out. At the same time it should not be forgotten that the Russian-speaking population was never socially privileged in the areas where it lived in the republics, like the French or the British in their own colonial possessions. Therefore local nationalism, even with an Islamic hue, can have a long-term anti-Russian thrust only if it is artificially fanned.

It will not, however, be easy for the Russians, the inhabitants of the Muslim states of the former Soviet Union, or the political leadership of Moscow and the local capitals to adapt to the new realities. A mechanism of political cooperation and political relations is still only being drawn up. The two sides are still only acquiring the attributes of normal diplomatic ties. They are still only learning to respect each other in a new way.

Is an Anti-Russian Bloc Possible?

People are asking whether the Muslim republics will unite in a single bloc with an anti-Russian thrust on the basis of Muslim fundamentalism or pan-Turkism. Fear sees danger everywhere. Those who ask the question close their eyes to today's realities and to history. The desire to set up a dialogue and intercourse among people with the same religion and a common cultural heritage is a natural and legitimate process. At present the nationalist factor is proving stronger than the Muslim factor, and history also demonstrates that Islam has never been a basis for stable political alliances. Not to mention the fact that within the framework of the former USSR it is represented by its own two main branches—Sunnism and Shiism. Whereas Shiism is actively supported from without by Iran, the Sunni trend is supported by Saudi Arabia.

As for pan-Turkism, the ideas of unification or cooperation among Turkic-speaking peoples will undoubtedly elicit a response, particularly among the intelligentsia. The interethnic contradictions among the Turkic peoples at present seem stronger than the trend toward unification. The conflicts between the Kyrgyz and the Uzbeks, for example, are too fresh in the memory to be able to speak of pan-Turkism as a real political factor.

Other forces are also joining in the political game in the region. The states of the former USSR have been included in the CSCE. The borders of European interests have been moved right up to China and Afghanistan. The purpose of this gesture—on the West's part—is to influence the development of events in the former Soviet republics toward the values and the accepted norms of behavior of European states, ranging from observance of human rights to measures to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The first steps in this direction inspire cautious optimism, if they do not in time take the form of pressure on Russia.

Russia's relations with its "nearby Muslim foreign parts" are becoming the touchstone by which its future relations with the entire Muslim world are verified. Whereas the Soviet Union used to be regarded both by radical nationalist Muslim regimes and by conservative ones as a strategic counterweight to the West, they now look on Russia, which is renewing itself, as an unknown quantity. Will it be a friendly, equal partner of the Muslim countries, demonstrating opportunities for harmonious coexistence?

(Footnote) (Aleksey Vasilyev, born in 1939, is deputy director of the Russian Academy of Sciences Africa Institute, president of the Russian Center for Arab, African, and Islamic Studies, and a member of the Russian Foreign Ministry Council for International Relations. He has written some 20 scientific monographs and current affairs books. These include "A History of Saudi Arabia," "Egypt and the Egyptians," and "The Persian Gulf at the Epicenter of the Storm")

Planned IMF Financial Aid Examined

PM1703100792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 14 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 4

[Article by Vladimir Mikheyev: "IMF Will Grant Russia Credits and Funds to Stabilize Ruble; Size of Financial Aid Still Has To Be Specified"]

[Text] It looks as though the IMF has finally bowed to the need for vigorous intervention in the course of economic reform in Russia. That is the assertion of the Swedish expert Anders Aslund, the "clerk of the Duma" attached to Yegor Gaydar's government. This Russian Government adviser stated in an interview with the newspaper THE BOSTON GLOBE that on 30 March the IMF will officially approve the creation of a $5 billion fund to support and stabilize the ruble for Russia and will at the same time supply a further $12 billion in the form of credits and funds to extinguish the foreign debt of the republics of the former USSR.

The report cannot fail to instill optimism. A. Aslund bases this gratifying news, it is to be supposed, on his personal ties inside IMF circles. Previously another figure for Western aid was circulating—$4 billion. This sum was cited earlier by U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Nicholas Brady. It remains to be suggested that the varied information was caused by the continuing debates around not only the size of the lifebelt for Russia and the CIS as a whole abut also regarding the expediency in general of massive financial aid.

Recently the chorus of voices arguing the practical usefulness of U.S. aid to Russia has been heard markedly more loudly. Here the arguments are varied. Two avenues in the camp of our benefactors can hypothetically be singled out.

One group sees benefit in Russia's integration into the world economy on the basis of the rights of a democratic state with a market economy. For that "financial support is essential and money is needed to import the necessary goods and to stabilize the ruble" (U.S. financier Robert Hormats). Here "Russia right now does not need charity, it is acutely in need of support from the United States and other Western states" (Robert Strauss, the U.S. ambassador in Moscow). The motifs of Russia's entry into the family of people inhabiting the "civilized world" were also present in the sensation-causing statement by former U.S. President Richard Nixon.

Another group views the possibility of America's collaboration in stabilizing the situation in Russia from the viewpoint of geopolitical interests. Here they see Russia either as a potential ally or simply as a state adhering to a policy of friendly neutrality, especially when the United States defends its interests in the Third World. Thus, L. Eagleburger, the U.S. deputy secretary of state, sees in aid to the former USSR "a problem connected with U.S. national security." He is against the "disorderly pumping of money into the region" and against "throwing money to the wind." S. Nunn, chairman of the

Senate Armed Services Committee, is in solidarity with him, having recently made a trip to Russia and Ukraine. For him the main thing is "progress in the sphere of conversion and the dismantling of nuclear and chemical installations, which accords with the interests of safeguarding America's security."

Thus the granting of economic aid to Russia and the CIS is linked for influential politicians in Washington with the further elimination of the potential threat from the former Soviet republics. It looks as though the United States is less interested than our industrially developed European neighbors in consolidating the market economy in Russia. Hence an additional complication: The granting of funds and credits from the IMF is connected with U.S. Congress' unreadiness to increase the share of the U.S. contribution to the IMF by $12 billion. This decision was made nearly two years ago and all the leading powers have already fulfilled their commitments. The United States is procrastinating, citing the federal budget deficit as a result of the general economic decline in the country.

According to IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus, if the United States does not contribute its share of the money, then that international financial organization will encounter considerable difficulties. This cannot fail to affect the allocation of the funds so necessary to encourage reforms in Russia. Already, AP reports, some experts believe that the sum necessary for aid to Russia can be collected if the IMF and the "group of seven," which unites the world's leading creditors—the United States, Japan, Germany, France, Britain, Italy, and Canada—contribute at the same time.

Although the size of the IMF financial aid package still needs to be specified, in practice no doubts remain that at least half the former Soviet republics will be admitted as members of the fund during the spring session of the World Bank and the IMF. The session opens 27 April in Washington. So we shall wait and see.

Federation Affairs

Shakhray To Be Stripped of Deputy Mandate

OW1703170592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1602 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russian Vice Prime Minister and government adviser Sergey Shakhray will be the first representative of the Russian Government to be stripped of his parliamentary mandate under the formal pretext that he combined his post of deputy with a seat in the cabinet. The press center of the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet told "INTERFAX" correspondent Andrey Pershin that Monday [16 March] evening the first deputy chairman of the Supreme Soviet Sergey Filatov told Shakhray that the parliament will recall his deputy certification this week. The press secretary said the Supreme Soviet's decision was motivated by Shakhray's news conference Monday which was held in the Russian "White House". The parliament was chosen because its Small Hall, where such events are usually held, is larger and better equipped than the press center of the Russian Government, the press secretary said.

The press center said the parliamentary leaders were dissatisfied with Shakhray's criticism of the Supreme Soviet and tried to discredit him in front of the press. Foreign journalists faced obstacles in entering the meeting hall and security was stepped up. The vice prime minister does not have a personal security force. Shakhray's press center said the security force misinformed foreign correspondents of the meeting time.

Kokoshin Outlines Future Military Needs

PM1603142792 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 17 Mar 92 pp 1, 2

[Interview with Andrey Kokoshin, correspondent member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and deputy director of the Institute of the United States and Canada, by special correspondent Yelena Agapova, with additional questions from WASHINGTON POST correspondent Fred Hiatt; place and date not given: "Before You Form An Army You Should Know What It Is For, Expert Andrey Kokoshin Believes"—first four paragraphs are introduction]

[Text] Today's issue of KRASNAYA ZVEZDA publishes an account of the decree setting up a Russian Ministry of Defense and (temporarily) entrusting B. Yeltsin with the duties of defense minister. This decree and this appointment undoubtedly furnish some answers to numerous questions about the military policy of the Russian state.

The formation of a Russian army, so the official commentary stresses, is not yet in question. But, following the logic of events, this question is predetermined. Undoubtedly analysis of the basic concept of the Russian armed forces will occupy the minds of analysts and specialists both in the CIS countries and in the world community in the immediate future. In this context we think that readers of KRASNAYA ZVEZDA will be interested in the views of Andrey Kokoshin, correspondent member of the Russian Academy of Sciences and deputy director of the Institute of the United States and Canada, a specialist in military-political questions and national security, who, as we know, is regarded as of this moment as one of the most likely candidates for the post of Russian defense minister.

I entered the office of the deputy director of the Institute of the United States and Canada almost at the same time as WASHINGTON POST correspondent Fred Hiatt. He asked twenty questions—from the one about military reform, which he must be heartily sick of, to a question about the relationship between the USA Institute and the KGB. I think there is some sense in reproducing, in addition to my own, some of Fred's questions, which are interesting in themselves and reflect the spectrum of U.S. interests in the situation surrounding our armed forces.

But first about how the 46-year-old Andrey Kokoshin himself reacts to being nominated. (Let us recall that this conversation took place some days ago, when the question of the formation of a Russian Defense Ministry had not yet been settled). Among those who have made the suggestion are representatives of the "Democratic Russia" and "Military Men for Democracy" movements; G. Yefremov, general director of the "Mashinostroyeniye" science and production association; B. Bunkin, general designer of the "Almaz" science and production association; Academicians Yu. Ryzhov and Ye. Velikhov, and others.

[Kokoshin] I confess that this was somewhat unexpected for me. It is not so important whether or not I become minister. I assess the very fact of my nomination as a good opportunity to bring my views and ideas in the military-political sphere to public attention and to participate in drawing up a military doctrine for the Russian state. I am deeply convinced that military policy and military doctrine should not be created solely within the confines of the military department. Just as they should not be fathered only by civilian specialists. Serious joint work is needed, a synthesis of the views of both groups. But this work, unfortunately, is not being done. In fact it never has been done.

[Agapova] It would appear that the perennial opposition between Arbatov's Institute and some military authorities has played its part.

[Kokoshin] There have been attempts to establish cooperation, nevertheless. For example, experts from the General Staff Academy and the Committee of Scientists for Global Security held an 18-month seminar on "Policy and Military Strategy." Initially there was not even a common system of parameters within which to conduct the discussion. But step by step we have moved toward mutual understanding and have achieved positive results.

Today the time has come to leave aside emotional outbursts and cliches of all kinds. A sober, pragmatic approach to military policy is needed. I entirely advocate ending the war between "whites" and "reds." Right now it is extremely important to gather all the best forces of the officers' corps and specialists to resolve military-political problems. We are faced with a profound crisis in the Armed Forces which threatens to have serious consequences for the whole of society. As of today Russia has no clearly defined military policy within the CIS. The CIS Joint Armed Forces not only have no doctrine, but no military concept either. An army cannot live that way. It must have clear goals and tasks. Without this an army becomes ungovernable and dangerous. [Kokoshin ends]

From the KRASNAYA ZVEZDA dossier: A. Kokoshin was born in 1945, the son of an officer. He graduated from the Moscow's Bauman Military-Technical Institute. He belongs to no political party. He is an officer of the reserve.

[WASHINGTON POST] Can you explain why Generals Volkogonov and Kobets are talking about setting up a Russian army in the near future, while Yeltsin is still claiming that Russia will be last in this question?

[Kokoshin] Right now there is one sentiment in the Armed Forces—everyone wants certainty. The state of not knowing has dragged on too long. It is having a crushing effect on the morale and psychological state of the officers. But I understand perfectly well Yeltsin's position too. It is simply dangerous to try to transform overnight a gigantic organism which has existed for 70 years. What is needed here is especially careful consideration, followed by determination.

[WASHINGTON POST] How do you think that officers will relate to a defense minister who has not served in the army?

[Kokoshin] I think that they will relate in different ways. But, to answer your question, let me say that a civilian minister should not command troops, lead exercises, and so forth.

[WASHINGTON POST] (Fred smiles). Our former Defense Secretary Weinberger always wanted to do that...

[Kokoshin] That is a mistake made by some civilians who very much want to command troops. The military should do their own job: combat training, the elaboration of operations plans, and the direct running of the day-to-day life of the troops. A civilian minister has his own duties: for instance, questions of material and technical backup for the army, which is extremely complex in our difficult economic conditions. The military budget, the optimization of arms-purchasing programs, juridical questions concerning rights to land, the transportation of arms, and so forth. World experience in this sphere is well known, including U.S. experience in dividing duties between a civilian defense secretary and the chairman of the joint chiefs of staff.

[Agapova] What kind of armed forces does Russia need, in your view?

[Kokoshin] I do not claim to have a ready-made formula. I will repeat: Dozens of specialists, both military and civilian, should participate in the elaboration of Russia's military policy. But there are things which are obvious, in my view. Throughout the postwar period we have been preparing for either a nuclear or a large-scale conventional war. Our Armed Forces and the mobilizational plan for industry—everything was geared toward this. Today the probability of these types of armed conflict is quite minimal. But there is a probability of conflicts of the type that the Americans call low- or medium-intensity. In the West armed forces have been reorganized to take account of this. Our Armed Forces are still slaves, I would say, to the circumstances of the disintegration of the former Union and the very serious economic situation. We will not succeed in ensuring the security of Russia and its allies unless we answer the question: What kinds of conflict can we expect in the future? And unless we reorganize the Armed Forces with this in mind. The reduction of the army should take place not just because we have budget difficulties but, I repeat, taking account of the types of probable conflicts. A combined-arms army with a powerful tank component is already an anachronism, a dinosaur from World War II. Russia can be given a reliable defense by the use of restructured, high-technology branches of the Armed Forces—the Air Force, the Strategic Rocket Forces, and the Navy, with significantly reduced and radically restructured ground troops. Rapid deployment forces, capable of operating in any area where an external threat to Russia's security arises, should occupy an important role in in the overall structure of the armed forces.

Many people believe that, in conditions whereby conventional armed forces and armaments are being sharply cut back, nuclear weapons will play a more important role in our country in maintaining security. But I do not think that we should rely too much on the nuclear shield, sitting under the nuclear umbrella and believing that not one drop of a world conflict will fall on us. It is absolutely essential that we have small but efficient general-purpose forces, including a navy, which is needed not only for coastal defense but for the defense of the strictly regulated interests of Russia and its CIS allies.

[Agapova] I know that you are a member of a national commission for assisting conversion and head of the the Center for Conversion and Privatization. What are your views on this problem?

[Kokoshin] It is impossible to convert the defense industry without once again clear guidelines for military policy. Above all, we have to know what armed forces and what types of weapons we will have in five, 10, or 15 years. Defense industry leaders talk as follows: All our lives we have made missiles to combat U.S. aircraft-carrier groups. What are we to do now, seeing that we are almost allies with the United States? And what should we make instead of missiles anyway? It is important for defense industry workers to know what part of the industry to convert, and what should remain to ensure our state's defense capability. So far there are no answers to these questions. Meanwhile our defense complex is a sort of resource of competitiveness on the world market. In cutting back military production, Russia should not simply close plants and workshops which produce military output, as is done in such cases in the West. They should be converted to civilian production. Our research and selective analysis of the course of negotiations between 50 Soviet enterprises and partners in the West indicate that many Soviet enterprises have a chance of getting into international markets. This applies above all to space technology, rocket building, the aviation industry, ship building, the production of high-quality steel and composite materials, oil production and oil rig equipment, laser technology... Our center is now actively working on recommendations in the sphere of conversion policy. [Kokoshin ends]

To conclude the conversation we asked A. Kokoshin to briefly summarize some of the theses which, in his opinion, should be reflected in Russia's military doctrine.

[Kokoshin] Russian armed forces and the CIS Joint Armed Forces should be viewed above all as an instrument to deter aggression. If we do not manage to avert military conflict, our armed forces should be sufficient to rapidly curb the escalation of the conflict. I agree with specialists who consider it essential to create centrally based rapid deployment forces, which can be thrown in the shortest possible time into any region of the CIS to repulse external aggression, to end conflict on favorable terms acceptable to us. This requires appropriate transportation facilities and a developed infrastructure, including combat hardware dumps in appropriate regions under reliable control.

Aggression against Russia or other CIS states involving not just nuclear weapons but also the extensive use of conventional weapons is now extremely unlikely. Accordingly we need to eliminate the huge gulf which exists today between the current structure and composition of the armed forces and the real requirements of Russia and the CIS. The thesis that the role of nuclear weapons in ensuring the security of Russia and the CIS increases relative to the radical reduction of conventional armed forces, as some of our specialists suggest, needs to be studied very carefully. The war in the Persian Gulf did not give an unequivocal answer to this question. The role of nuclear forces can hardly be so important in "low-intensity conflicts."

For a long time the ability to deliver a retaliatory strike inflicting unacceptable damage on an aggressor was considered the basis of strategic stability. Today the problem of safe and reliable storage of nuclear weapons and their delivery systems are coming to the fore. There is a threat of nuclear weapons' escaping from the control of Russia's state leadership and CIS military command.

Right now it is necessary to take advantage of the possibilities which are opening up for cooperation between Russia and the United States as well as other nuclear powers in improving missile-attack early warning systems and increasing the reliability of systems covering the possibility of the nonsanctioned use of nuclear weapons. This will also enable us to substantially reduce our expenditure on ensuring strategic stability.

A new concept for Russian and CIS naval forces is needed. Russia and the Commonwealth states have real interests on the world's oceans. We are committed to ensuring safe navigation in a number of ocean areas as well as reliable lines of communication between western and eastern parts of Russia, which account for 50 percent of maritime freight traffic within Russia.

As I have already said, we need not only coastal defense naval forces, collaborating with aviation and land forces, but some proportion of the strategic missile carriers deployed on combat patrol in the Barents Sea and Sea of Okhotsk regions. Submarine forces are also needed, to ensure security of navigation in waters of the world's oceans which are important for Russia's national interests.

Yeltsin Addresses IZVESTIYA Jubilee

PM1703145192 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 14 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 1

["Telegram from Russian President B.N. Yeltsin in Connection with IZVESTIYA's 75th Anniversary"; dated 13 March 1992]

[Text] Dear Friends!

I warmly congratulate you on the newspaper's 75th anniversary.

In the long years of its existence, IZVESTIYA has built up a massive following. In today's difficult times, many thousands of readers remain loyal to their favorite publication. The newspaper's high reputation was created by several generations of IZVESTIYA staffers through their unswerving service to truth, even in the most difficult periods of our country's history.

It is particularly valuable today that your newspaper's journalists strive to preserve a high level of professionalism and to be objective at all times—something which is sometimes lacking in certain media sources. As a long-standing IZVESTIYA reader I particularly value the authors' loyalty to the norms of journalistic ethics and their correct behavior in respect of their opponents. I am convinced that all of these qualities will help your newspaper to overcome difficult ordeals in the period of reforms, to remain required reading, and to bring the joy of communication to new generations of readers.

I sincerely wish all at IZVESTIYA new creative successes, and to its readers I wish the joy of communication with their favorite newspaper!

[signed] B. Yeltsin, president of the Russian Federation

13 March 1992

Politicians Support Treaty, Citizens' Meeting

LD1703175892 Moscow TASS in English 1735 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Moscow March 17 TASS—Crucial changes and the very existence of the Russian Federation now depends on the solution of the issue of the Russian national-state structure and consolidation of the Russian statehood, says an appeal to Russian political, professional, public and national organizations, the Russian business community and the public.

The appeal, circulated here today, was signed by president of the Russian Union of Manufacturers and Entrepreneurs Arkadiy Volskiy, chairman of the Russian Farmers' Party Yuriy Chernichenko, co-chairman of the Democratic Reforms' Movement Aleksandr Yakovlev, chairman of the Confederation of Journalists' Movements Eduard Sagalayev and other Russian politicians and public figures.

In the opinion of the appeal's authors, the signing of the federative treaty to divide the powers between the federation's subjects, which has been initialed by 18 out of 20 republics, and the adoption of a new Russian Constitution may contribute to the solution of the most topical task.

The new Constitution may be adopted at the extraordinary Congress of Russian People's Deputies to be held in April, 1992.

A meeting of Russian citizens, which should be held on the eve of the deputies' congress, may help the acceleration of economic reforms, consolidation of forces, supporting crucial changes, and adoption of the new Constitution.

This important arrangement should be held with direct participation of the Russian president and involve representatives of various political, professional, public and national organizations, the business community and the public.

The meeting should aim to unite the supporters of crucial economic transformations, make a public analysis of the draft Russian Constitution and approve the main item on the agenda of the deputies' congress.

The authors of the appeal suggest holding the meeting on April 4, 1992, on the eve of the congress.

Reaction to Federation Treaty 'Unpredictable'

MK1703123192 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Mar 92 p 3

[Report by Vitaliy Portnikov: "Despite Everything, a Federation of Homelands. It Only Remains To Sign the Federation Treaty. And Approve It at the Congress"]

[Text] On Saturday [14 March] NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA reported on the unexpected initialing in the White House of the draft Federation Treaty submitted by the speaker of the Russian parliament. Ruslan Khasbulatov has proved to be a stronger person than Mikhail Gorbachev (or maybe he had a stabler structure behind him): His negotiating partners, who had assembled merely to discuss the document, initialed it and thereby placed the first stone in the foundation of Russia's future constitutional structure. If the signing of the treaty and its subsequent adoption by the Congress of Russian Federation People's Deputies pass off successfully, we will find ourselves in a totally new state, effectively a "federation of homelands," since under the treaty the republics have total control over their own natural resources, can independently engage in foreign policy and international economic ties, and can even determine their own border regime—the former Union republics, when they were Union republics, could not even dream of all this. "The Russian Federation has changed substantially," Kaadyr-ool Bicheldey, chairman of the Tuva Supreme Soviet, remarked after the signing of the document. Even a few months ago Russia's leaders scarcely expected to find themselves in such a state, but the new authorities have demonstrated that they are prepared to make considerable concessions for the sake of preserving the most important thing. However, it is not impossible that the flexibility of the incumbent of the White House was influenced by the almost unanimous refusal by the parliaments of the Russian republics to sign the agreement on the demarcation of powers, which was called upon to take the place of the Federation Treaty. And also by the approaching referendum in Tatarstan. Although Murtaza Rakhimov, chairman of the Bashkir Supreme Soviet, had declared that "no republic had any intention of seceding" and reaffirmed his support for the Tatarstan referendum, because "we support any initiative aimed at achieving economy autonomy." The Bashkir leader believes that it is this that Tatarstan wants, rather that secession from Russia. A delegation from Tatarstan attended the meeting, but did not sign. But it is not impossible that the future signing of the treaty will open the way for a settlement of both this problem and relations with Groznyy: Both "rebellious" republics may accede to the treaty as associate members or sign bilateral agreements with Russia's leadership.

Despite the rather widespread view in the corridors of the Russian parliament that the "Federation Treaty is the way to bring about the disintegration of Russia," it remains only to note that Ruslan Khasbulatov and Ramazan Abdulatipov have managed if not to finally prevent this disintegration, then at any rate to halt it. The fact that the initialing of the treaty has caused many new problems is a different matter. "The only thing I fear is how this will be seen by Russia's krays and oblasts," Kaadyr-ool Bicheldey pointed out. Indeed, the administrative-territorial formations—and many of them have not only no lesser complaints than the former autonomous formations but also much greater potential—may react quite sharply to what has happened. And it is perfectly possible that in the future the White House or the president will have to sign corresponding agreements with Russian territories. Will the country lose out as a result of this? I think it will only gain. The reaction of the upcoming Congress seems far more unpredictable. It is already clear that the Constitutional Commission has received quite a hard slap in the face: Its draft made no mention of any Federation Treaty, and the republics hoped rather for attributive statehood [respubliki nadeyalis skoreye atributivnoy gosudarsvennostyu]. Will the authors of the new constitution agree to rework the draft? And what will be the fate of the Federation Treaty if the constitution is not approved by the Congress as a whole, leaving aside the possibility that the treaty itself may be rejected? "With a view to preserving Russia the deputies will have to understand our wishes," Vladislav Zotin, president of the Republic of Mariy El, declared. The Federation Treaty is probably the main task for the Congress presidium. Governments come and go, constitutions are amended and replaced, but for all this you need to have a territory at the very least. "No territory, no problems," as the generalissimo could probably say about today's federation mess.

What will the future Russia be like—the state that may put up alongside the monument to Minin and Pozharskiy a memorial to Khasbulatov, leaning on Abdulatipov's shoulder? For the first time in the entire history of the country a possibility has emerged of building a real functioning federation in which the essence of the status of subject will lie in functions rather than in highfalutin titles. Would such a state be lasting? I would not venture to answer that question in the affirmative at the moment, but at any rate it is worth trying to build it. Of course, this is more difficult than putting forward unitarist slogans while ignoring the way the map of Russia is coming apart, but on the other hand it is more promising. Perhaps world integration processes will simply outstrip Russia's protracted disintegration and during the next round of history, in a rich Russia that is firmly established both at home and in the world community, few people will be bothered by a republic's desire to increase its own status—in that case a new quest for a civilized compromise will begin, and this will surprise nobody. But the present compromise is causing astonishment, like any consensus reached in our cruel times. It remains only to avoid smashing the fragile construct by playing around with the [voting] buttons in the Grand Kremlin Palace.

Stankevich Reviews Economy, Separatism

AU1503212592 Vienna WIENER ZEITUNG in German 14 Mar 92 p 3

[Report by Peter Bochskanl: "Separatism Endangers Russia"]

[Text] Russia is currently facing greater danger from separatism than its enormous economic problems. This is the view of Yeltsin adviser Sergey Borisovich Stankevich, who was the guest of honor at the traditional banquet of the Concordia Press Club in Vienna on Thursday [12 March].

The 38-year-old Russian state councilor and deputy chairman of the Moscow Soviet fears that the referendum scheduled in 10 days in the Tartar Republic, where 48 percent of the people are Muslim and 44 percent Russian, might cause a chain reaction wiping the Russian state off of the map.

Since the non-Russian republics have only 5 percent of Russia's population but equal 51 percent of its territory, the Russians are willing to pay almost any price to prevent this development. Stankevich was optimistic that the intensive ongoing negotiations among the 20 republics on a federation treaty can be concluded successfully; the chances for an agreement with the western republics are greater.

Economy: Everything Must Be Reformed

The economic reforms, which began three months ago, are particularly difficult because one cannot proceed systematically and gradually, but take all necessary steps almost simultaneously.

Even though the patience of the people was exhausted at the beginning of the reforms, so far strikes and uprisings have been "surprisingly" avoided, generally. Stankevich said that the price increases since the beginning of the year have reached about three to five times the level of previous prices, but compensation has been attempted for those who were hardest hit, particularly pensioners, by tripling social benefits.

Major unrest in April cannot be ruled out when the price of oil is announced. Concessions will be made in this area as well, but these cannot be too extensive or the efforts for stabilization will be foiled.

Despite all the difficulties, Stankevich currently sees a certain amount of stabilization in the Russian economy, "even though this is at the trough of the crisis. Nevertheless, preventing further decline is something, considering the situation we are in." The economy is gaining momentum gradually as companies have stopped doing nothing but complain and are now looking for ways to help themselves.

The main tasks now are preventing further decline of production and pushing ahead with agricultural reform. In this process it is necessary to carefully overcome the bitter resistance of both the rural population and the agricultural lobby in parliament. The agricultural reform must not be delayed any further because otherwise the spring planting will be jeopardized, which would cause disastrous difficulties for Russia in autumn.

No One Is Interested in Earning Money

It is very important to create financial stabilization because an economy cannot work if no one is interested in earning money. Thus, the agricultural regions do not have any incentive now to sell their foodstuffs, even though Moscow, for instance, would have money to buy them. Russia is currently negotiating with the West for a stabilization fund, which would require $5 to $7 billion. This is where Western aid would be most necessary, Yeltsin's adviser said.

Stankevich, who seems rather like a Western executive in his behavior and precise speech, concluded his presentation with a vivid, optimistic image: "The crows that have spent the winter in Austria are now going back to their Russian homes. This means they hope to find food there. They believe in Russia, as I do."

Chubays on Privatization, Foreign Investment

AU1603085492 Duesseldorf HANDELSBLATT in German 13-14 Mar 92 p 9

["bzi" report: "The Old 'Nomenklatura' Must Not Get Any Chance"]

[Text] Moscow—The Russian Government wants to make it possible for foreign investors to take over 100 percent of industrial enterprises. Privatization Minister Anatoliy Chubays said in an interview with HANDELSBLATT and WIRTSCHAFTSWOCHE that the sale of arms companies to foreigners is not taboo anymore.

"We are firmly convinced that we cannot do without foreign capital in privatization and armament conversion." The 36-year-old doctor of economics heads the central "Committee for the Administration of State Property" in Russia, which Boris Yeltsin has commissioned with the preparation and practical implementation of the privatization program. As a government member Chubays at the same time is one of the closest confidants of First Deputy Prime Minister Yegor Gaydar, who is responsible for the entire economic reform. Before his appointment Chubays worked as chief economic adviser to St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak.

Chubays points out that foreigners "can acquire private property in Russia already." A special decision by the government is necessary only in the case of companies that have more than 10,000 employees or have a monopoly position. Insurance companies, stock exchanges, and armament companies also have a special position in the Russian Government's privatization program. However, Chubays wants to establish a "standardized procedure" so that the government does not need to check each individual case.

Procedure Very Bureaucratic So Far

On principle the responsible regional committees should then also be able to decide on the applications of foreign investors. The minister admitted that the current "privatization procedure is still very bureaucratic." The privatization minister assumes that foreign investors might be interested above all in some companies of the military-industrial complex. Chubays says that in his previous function as deputy mayor of St. Petersburg he tried to win foreign companies over to armament conversion. In the government's privatization program the possibility has been left open to sell Russian arms companies—also 100 percent of them—to foreign interested persons.

According to the minister, Boris Yeltsin is determined to accelerate privatization over the next few months. During the first quarter the plan targets for the conversion of state property will probably not be reached. But Chubays is convinced "that March and April will be turning-point months" for the entire program. All in all, the chances are not bad that one-fourth of the state property, worth about 90 billion rubles, will be privatized by the end of this year.

"If the privatization program fails, the economic reforms in general will also fail," Chubays stressed. There is still a "strong communist lobby" in the Russian parliament that would love to thwart the program. Even though the government plans are certainly not ideal, the decisive thing is that privatization has finally started after years of just talk. "It is my goal," the young minister said, "to make this process irreversible."

Communist Lobby Is Spreading

Chubays thinks that the German experiences with privatization are very important. At the invitation of Trust Agency head Birgit Breuel the minister will visit Germany, probably at the end of March, to gather even more specific information about the work of the Trust Agency. As in Germany, Chubays thinks that "privatization of privatization" is generally necessary in Russia, too: He wants to involve more banks and consulting companies in the conversion of state property. In Moscow and St. Petersburg mediating companies are already active, which are being supported by the government.

The minister thinks that it is urgently necessary to introduce private ownership of land. So far the Russian Constitution forbids the normal purchase and sale of real estate. This is a considerable obstacle to privatization. The government will make every effort to push through corresponding amendments to the Constitution at the next meeting of the People's Deputies Congress in April. At the same time, Boris Yeltsin is preparing an ukase to order a practical transition regulation of the land question. "Without private ownership of land," Chubays says, "a normal market economy is impossible."

Chubays is determined to counter corruption and self-enrichment in the course of privatization. The so-called "nomenklatura privatization" endangers the success of the entire program: "If the people feel cheated and must watch how the property again lands in the hands of the CPSU secretaries, we will lose any trust," the minister stressed. Only recently was an illegal case of privatization discovered, involving an employee of his ministry. According to his own statements, Chubays is particularly trying to get new employees for his work to overcome the resistance of the old apparatus. "It is easy to replace ministers," Chubays said, "but it is practically impossible to change the apparatus."

Deputy Minister on Cost, Standard of Living

PM1703163792 Moscow TRUD in Russian 17 Mar 92 pp 1, 2

[Interview with O. Sayenko, Russian deputy minister of labor and employment, by TRUD political commentator V. Golovachev; place and date not given: "Live To Survive, Or Survive To Live? O. Sayenko, Russian Deputy Minister of Labor and Employment, Describes Calculation of Physiological Subsistence Minimum"]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Golovachev] According to Russian State Committee for Statistics figures, more than 25 million people in January were living below the minimum subsistence level, which was 550 rubles [R] at the time. Will the situation change in March or April?

[Sayenko] I think it will. As you know, the Russian president's decree makes provision for one-shot payments in February and March to impoverished population groups—R200 to pensioners, and payments for children and so on. Add another R200 to R342 (the minimum pension), and you get January's minimum subsistence level. Admittedly, as we said, this minimum rose in February and March to R650. Therefore, in April we are proposing to pay pensioners R300 each in addition to their pensions. So, the minimum pension would effectively be around R650. Let me stress that these are just our suggestions at the moment, a definitive decision lies ahead. But I am convinced that this decision on additional payments of R300 to pensioners would accord with the humane principles of social security for those in acute need.

[Golovachev] Should these payments be directed to all pensioners or only to those on small pensions?

[Sayenko] To everyone. Otherwise calculations and registration of documents become extremely complex with a differentiated approach, payments are held up for many weeks, the upshot being that the needy do not get support in time. In Russia a paltry number of people receive large pensions. Society would have far greater problems in effecting savings by not paying them extra (or not paying them the full extra payment).

[Golovachev] Is it planned to help pupils, in particular students?

[Sayenko] Yes. I cannot as yet give you any specific figures, but there will be assistance without fail. For instance, in April we are proposing to pay students around R200-240. I think that payments for children (R150) as well as a number of others will also be increased. At least we are drafting these proposals.

[Golovachev] In all probability the inflationary spiral will take a fresh turn—as a result of prices of oil and other energy sources being freed. If, as the government plans, the price of one tonne of oil rises sevenfold, retail prices, according to our calculations, may soar by a factor of 5-6 (TRUD discussed this in detail 6 March). Have you taken this into consideration in your calculations?.

[Sayenko] No, the minimum subsistence level was determined on the basis of current inflation without taking into consideration the freeing of prices for energy sources. The scale and the timeframe are still vague here. Evidently, this will take place in the second half of April. The minimum subsistence level for May can be calculated on the basis of the actual price hike.

[Golovachev] It would be interesting to find out your opinion: Will retail prices rise 50 percent or severalfold?

[Sayenko] There are too many unknown factors in this task...

[Golovachev] Many readers are interested in the following question: Why is the parliament's Law on Indexing Incomes not being brought into force?

[Sayenko] The law was adopted at a time when we still did not have a full enough idea of the scale of the inflation and other turbulent economic processes. The law stipulates, for instance, that the indexing mechanism starts to operate when retail prices have risen by at least 6 percent. This quarter prices may have risen by at least 500 percent. You see how incomparable the scale is? At these rates of inflation, introducing this indexing mechanism would mean a straight road to hyperinflation. Yesterday, for instance, Ye. Gontmakher, head of our directorate, gave me calculations which show that the introduction of an automatic income indexing mechanism would result in total ungovernability in the economy.

We are now, effectively, implementing indexation, only in another way. Namely by targeted [adresnyy] extra payments to the strata of the population with the least social security. Let me say more: This is far more effective than indexing. Payments are made monthly rather than quarterly. We calculate the minimum subsistence level on the basis of real prices at market and state trade outlets and endeavor to raise the incomes of the impoverished to this level.

[Golovachev] The time for vacations is drawing near. As you know, "holiday pay" [otpusknyye] is calculated on the basis of last year's wages and these are in most cases far lower than this year's wages. Will people not find themselves in a grave material position during their vacation?

[Sayenko] We are also tackling this problem. We are drafting proposals to ensure that accountants take monthly wages, starting with this January, as a basis for calculating "holiday pay." I do not know whether our proposals will be passed, but we are presenting all the arguments and documents in favor of them.

[Golovachev] How much extra money will be needed to pay pensioners the extra R300 and for the other social support measures?

[Sayenko] Some R30-40 million for April alone. And the situation may change considerably after the prices of energy sources are raised.

[Golovachev] Where is the money to come from?

[Sayenko] First, from the Pension Fund (percentage payments to this fund are higher than last year). Second, from social insurance funds and the employment fund. But mainly from the budget.

Today the government is being criticized by right and left, from all quarters. Well, that is usually the fate of a reform government. But I definitely disagree with the charges of populism leveled against us. People are saying: With your social programs you are undermining the process of economic financial recovery. That is a profoundly erroneous approach. People who have devoted 40 years' work to the country are not to blame for the fact that the pensionable period of their lives has coincided with an unprecedented breakup and the reorganization of the economy. What about the children who are saying that they were born "at the wrong time"? These population groups need the state's support. Otherwise this would be an immoral, inhuman policy and no noble purpose justifies an inhuman attitude to old people, children, and socially defenseless population groups.

[Golovachev] How are your relations developing with the trade unions?

[Sayenko] They are demanding that broader social programs be implemented. In my view, their sense of proportion sometimes fails them. Rivalry between various trade union centers and their struggle for popularity with the masses often result in each trade union trying to outdo its "rivals" with its demands. However, it is necessary to act on the basis of what is possible rather than what is desirable. As they say in Italy, milk the cow but take care not to exhaust it... Things would be easier for us if a single trade union were to hold talks with us. In theory it is not confrontation and destructive opposition—which are bad for both working people and the economy—that are the most promising road for us, but civilized, mutually acceptable compromise and choice of the best possible options.

[Golovachev] According to State Committee for Statistics figures, there was a wholesale fall in real income and Russians' standard of living in January—by 40 percent. Will the decline be the same in April—after prices of energy sources are freed?

[Sayenko] Various population groups' standard of living dropped in different ways. This affected the impoverished least (although very perceptively) and "middling" population strata most. Social support will continue to be directed above all to those in acute need. This should help them withstand the April price hike.

As for the able-bodied population, they must be active and enterprising, seek additional work, and move into the field of small business.

As for the standard of living as a whole, it is continuing to fall now, but this is measured in just a few percentage points. Difficult trials lie in store for all of us at the end of April or in May, but I do not think that there should be a 40 percent drop in the standard of living. Wages at budget-funded organizations will be raised and many enterprises will take the same path. Reserves must be prepared for this today.

Ministers Answer Questions on Living Standards

LD1503215492

[Editorial Report] Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian at 0915 GMT on 14 March broadcasts a 45-minute live phone-in program entitled "How Shall we Live?". The program features Russian Industry Ministry Aleksandr Titkin and Stanislav Anisimov, minister of trade and material resources, answering viewers' questions in a studio phone-in chaired by commentator Irina Lapina.

Anisimov begins answering questions by saying it is impossible to predict today how much gasoline will cost, but that the price will increase. Titkin says that a program to stabilize industrial production and improve workers' motivation is under way. Referring to his prediction in parliament that industrial output would drop by 50 percent, Titkin says it is better to face reality now and revise the estimate in a more optimistic direction later. The 50 percent figure was an overall figure and did not refer to each individual enterprise, of course.

A viewer complains that there are no goods in the shops. Last year consumer goods output actually went up, Titkin replies. He says that shortages are due to panic buying and cuts in imports. Anisimov adds that he does not see any need for a 50 percent drop in output and everything should be done to avoid such a fall. Titkin says that one problem is that the military industries which are being converted to civilian production still need to find their niche in the market.

Titkin describes how, as minister of industry, he has given several enterprises permission to set up a joint-stock company, whose members subsequently turned out to be what he describes as "odious characters". The aim has been to discredit the government, Titkin says.

Anisimov describes how prices are now being set by producers under contract with customers. Monopoly prices have to be combated, however.

Titkin says that the military-industrial complex is the basis of an industrial upturn. He says he personally feels that some privatization of the defense industries is feasible, although some people are against any privatization of it.

Lapina says she has a question for Anisimov: "Stanislav Vasilyevich, here is a question from Permyakov. The Russian Government intends to buy 5 million tonnes of coal from China and Poland, despite the fact that we in the Kuzbass sell coal abroad. Wouldn't the government do better to buy coal from the miners? That is his question."

Anisimov replies: "It is a very interesting question. The whole point is that the coalworkers have only offered the metallurgists 38 million tonnes of coking coal in the framework of (?state requirements), while the metallurgists need 50 million tonnes. So the government has from the very beginning opted for giving the coalworkers an interest in selling as much coal as possible to the metallurgists to enable the latter to work normally. A total of $600 million was allocated to this end. The money is being used to purchase what the coalworkers need today—both in Poland and Czechoslovakia, and from credit facilities made available in Spain and other places. Food is also being purchased. Kemerovo is getting 8,000 tonnes of sugar in March from what the government is buying, from these credit facilities, and these dollars which are being allocated. So there is full support for the coalworkers in this. It is another matter that Kemerovo is not fully supplying the metallurgists with the requisite coal today. And so blast furnaces are idling today and batteries of coke ovens are not working at full capacity. Kemerovo Oblast has failed to supply something like 4.5 million tonnes to date. All the other basins have acquitted themselves."

Anisimov goes on to counter charges that the government is hostile to the military-industrial complex. Titkin says that parliament should pass a law to formally regulate the conversion process. Banks need to be subject to tight controls, he says. Anisimov says that a trade privatization program is being prepared. Titkin adds that the ministry believes privatization is a method of improving efficiency, not a get-rich-quick program or a way of tying up loose money.

Anisimov says that food is crucial and everything must be done to ensure a good harvest. Titkin ends by saying that industrial production will produce the wealth required to improve everyone's lot.

Gaydar 'Medical Treatment' Analogy Viewed

PM1303163092 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 12 Mar 92 p 1

[Report by Gennadiy Seleznev: "Administering Treatment Again"]

[Text] The Russian Government has sent the editorial office the latest bulletin of current information on the progress of economic reforms. Thanks.

It includes certain reprints from periodicals which are clearly close to the "heart" of the "publishers." And this time we are presented with excerpts from an interview Ye. Gaydar gave to the newspaper CHAS PIK.

I read: "We are accused of carrying out reforms which are too harsh. But stabilization and the freeing of prices in an economy such as ours are very unpleasant surgical operations. And a doctor whose hands shake out of compassion for the patient can only do harm." I would not have drawn attention to this hackneyed image employed by the first vice premier, one to which he has often resorted in recent interviews, but for one thing.

At the time when Yegor Timurovich was a graduate student, official propaganda suppressed the true diagnoses of people who landed up in psychiatric hospitals. Society was told that all dissidents were ill and that they had to receive medical treatment for their own good. Today we are aware of who was treated in such establishments and how that treatment was carried out.

Is this current semi-official cliche of the new authorities not reminiscent of recent ideas about the sick and the healthy? It is. Only now, almost all Russians figure among the sick. The government cabinet should hold at least one of its numerous sessions in one of the capital's underpasses (when the warm weather comes, the idea could be put into practice in the open air) and ask hundreds of poor people about the "price therapy." Or travel out to "Rostselmash," the Magnitogorsk Metallurgical Combine, or thousands of other enterprises and talk with the millions of "patients" about the violent treatment they are receiving. It can be guessed that the surgeons and patients will swap roles there and the operation will be performed without anesthetic. Although, as Yegor Timurovich likes to say, the scenario could be different: People will recognize that they are indeed sick, because this is what official propaganda tells them day in, day out. Given such a development, society, as with the story of the psychiatric hospitals, will have to wait several years before the era of the new glasnost dawns and we learn once again who was being treated, how, and what was being used for the treatment.

Expert Panel Views Second Stage of Reform

PM1803111392 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 17 Mar 92 p 2

[Irina Demchenko report under "Events and Comments" rubric: "While There Are No Oil Prices, Any Economic Forecast Is Inaccurate"]

[Text] A regular session of the Experts' Institute of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs was held 14 March; it discussed a situation report on the second phase of the economic reform.

The determining factor of the second phase will be the definitive liberalization of prices for energy sources, which, according to the tradition in our country, was announced in advance by the Russian Government for April. According to S. Zhuravlev, a participant in the experts' session, there are mixed predictions about the situation. The liberalization of oil prices may in principle generate a price hike of 50-100 percent throughout the consumer sector according to the government's calculations, and a five- to seven-fold increase according to independent experts.

According to another scenario, which also has many supporters among the experts, the price liberalization and the transfer to commodity exchange with the former Union republics at world prices will lead to a sharp increase in sales of Russian oil and a corresponding growth in the import of consumer goods and food products into Russia. In that event the republic's national economic complex will be subjected to forced and accelerated restructuring. Goods produced by sectors of the light and food industries and agricultural output are not capable of withstanding competition. Meat production is already unprofitable in many areas in Russia, and a rise in the price of gasoline would make it even more so. A development of events according to this scenario would mean curtains for the entire Russian coal, chemical, and woodworking industries and ferrous metallurgy. Zhuravlev, who made his calculations on the basis of this forecast, believes that our society may not withstand the social consequences of such a development of events.

The problem of forecasting is also made more difficult by the completely unpredictable behavior of domestic producers. Owing to a number of circumstances—including the unprecedented monopolized state of the economy, its structural distortion, the existence of cartels, and the fact that many producers are convinced of the weakness of the power structures—many processes are not developing according to the classic pattern.

For example, according to data from the Russian Federation State Committee for Statistics, the actual volume of goods sold in January-February of this year is half last year's level. Commodity exchange has decreased by 52 percent in comparable prices. The manufacture of consumer goods has decreased by 14 percent overall (food by 28 percent). According to the classic laws of the market, such a fall in demand should make producers cut the prices of their goods or correspondingly reduce the volume of output; but neither one thing nor the other is happening. Of the 70 most important goods that the Russian Federation State Committee for Statistics is specially monitoring, prices have on average fallen on only 12, while they have remained at the previous level on five types of commodity and have risen on 53 types. Furthermore, although prices for meat and meat products fell in February (by 11 percent for beef in comparison with January), this is not connected with overproduction but with the mass slaughter of cattle as a result of feed shortages. Production is falling particularly perceptibly in the food industry, although the demand for food is growing, rather than in the output of complex domestic appliances, where demand has fallen sharply.

This virtually means that once producers have fixed a price that consumers cannot cope with, they are inclined to leave it as it is, anticipating state intervention. Practically our whole output, with negligible exceptions, is nonflexible as far as lowering prices is concerned. The producer counts on the fact that the organs of state power will not withstand the pressure from the impoverished population and will introduce more subsidies, compensations, and some kind of benefits such as the repeal of export tariffs, particularly since precedents have already been set.

In this connection the experts noted in their situation analysis the impossibility of any reliable forecasting inasmuch as there are absolutely no data on the prices oil extraction workers and oil refiners intend to set on their output. In principle, as the experience of the Baltic countries, and particularly Poland, shows, a liter of gasoline can cost 100 rubles [R] or even more—on condition, of course, that its producers are sure that the government will in any event advance loans for the sowing campaign, and the local organs of power will subsidize city passenger transport.

Deputy Minister of Finances S. Ignatyev, who participated in the review, stated that the shortage of money in our state is not an obstacle to the conclusion of deals. The volume of nonpayments on reciprocal settlements already comes to around R200 billion, which more often than not is caused by the lack of money in customers' accounts; but at the moment this is having little effect on the volume of production and commodity exchange. Our country illustrates the fact that the Keynesians may be right in their age-old dispute with the monetarists ("Gaydar's team" belongs to these), in whose opinion the basic economic processes—fluctuations in the volume of production, the level of prices, and employment—can be managed by controlling and regulating the volume of money in circulation. Until now the basic argument of those Keynesians who do not agree with this was America's Great Depression of 1929-1933.

The report "Economic Reform: The Second Step," which sums up the results of the discussion, will shortly be presented to the public by Prof. Ye. Yasin, director of the Experts' Institute of the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs, in the same way as the analogous report on January's results was presented at the time.

Government Experts' Economic Prognosis Cited

PM1603085592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 2

[Report by Irina Demchenko: "Government Experts' Forecast Inspires Pessimism"]

[Text] It has been learned from sources close to official sources that a group of experts under the Russian Government has prepared a forecast of the future development of economic reform.

The experts in state service still consider the main problem in the immediate future to be the state budget deficit, whose size at the end of the first quarter they estimate at 8 percent of gross national product [GNP]. It is interesting that at the last government session First Deputy Finance Minister V. Barchuk, known as the chief budget specialist in both the Pavlov cabinet and the Yeltsin cabinet, stated that the expected deficit totals 10 percent of GNP. This, incidentally, fully coincides with independent analysts' January forecast, regarded at the time by the government as "unjustifiably pessimistic." At the beginning of the year Russian reform leaders themselves expected (and they confirmed this in the March Memorandum on Economic Policy) that the budget deficit for the first quarter would not exceed 1 percent of GNP. Despite the fact that they have now had to review their viewpoint, in Barchuk's opinion the year could end with a deficit of 4 percent of GNP, which is almost in line with developed countries' experience.

Owing to the impossibility of collecting planned budget revenues in full—mainly because of a sharp fall in exports and a corresponding decrease in revenues from export tariffs—the Russian Government experts are recommending that state expenditure policy be tightened up even more, above all military and capital construction expenditure.

Appropriations for subsidies to loss-making or unprofitable enterprises are not envisaged. The only exceptions are measures associated with the conversion of defense sectors, a program for which, incidentally, has still not been elaborated. Defense expenditure in the draft budget for 1992, which has been sent to parliament, totals 6 percent of GNP, which is only 1 percent less than expenditure on social needs.

Budget appropriations for the conversion of military production in 1992 total 39 billion rubles [R]. This sum can be enough only for the most modest priority expenditures. The remaining outlays will be financed from the nonbudget conversion fund, which is being created from 3 percent deductions from the cost price of defense enterprises' output.

Henceforth responsibility for maintaining fixed prices for socially important goods and covering the losses of urban transport and housing and utilities provision, which includes the right to set the rent level—which naturally will no longer be fixed after this—is transferred exclusively to local budgets. It is planned to scrap the recently introduced concessions for the payment of value added tax on food products.

The draft annual budget contains large expenditures on the development of the agro-industrial complex—R251.7 billion, or 14 percent of the budget's expenditure element—which are traditionally divided into capital construction, preferential loans to kolkhozes and sovkhozes, and developing the private farming industry (less than 10 percent of the sum).

It is planned to channel a significant proportion of expenditure—over R700 billion—into social and cultural needs, including support for needy sections of the population. The size of the sum can evidently be attributed to growing number of people in need. In this context it cannot fail to be noted that all kinds of benefits and "assistance" are gradually taking an increasingly large place in the structure of incomes of increasingly wide sections of the Russian population. Naturally this cannot help to get rid of paternalistic illusions with regard to the state and, furthermore, is leading to an artificial leveling of the living standard.

The report by Minister of Economics A. Nechayev at the last Russian Government session forecast a further slump in production and consumption. In the government experts' opinion, retail trade turnover will total around 80 percent of the 1991 level by year's end, while the consumption fund's share of national income will increase from 80 to 86 percent. The proportion of food expenditure in the consumption structure will increase, and the proportion of expenditure on paid services will decrease even more.

A fall in oil production—down 14 percent from the already low 1991 level—is anticipated, and it is expected that production of ferrous metallurgy output will be down 15 percent, production of chemicals down 16 percent, consumer goods production down 13 percent, and production of foodstuffs down 18 percent. According to the forecast, which cannot be referred to as unjustifiably pessimistic, coal and electricity production will maintain last year's level. It is an extremely unpleasant fact that the fall in production is effectively not accompanied by structural perestroyka of the economy and has not been caused by it, as First Vice Premier Ye. Gaydar has repeatedly asserted.

The government experts' forecast does not devote attention to the disturbing question of the future rate of the ruble against the dollar. It has been learned from sources close to official sources that to maintain a rate of 1:140, which was fixed at the last currency auction, the Central Bank of Russia spent over $15 million. Hitherto its intervention had been limited to sums of $2-4 million. According to our source's information, the Central Bank of Russia does not have sufficient reserves to continue making similar currency interventions.

The ruble's weakness is confirmed by reports about the introduction of various money surrogates at local level. For example, the Economic News Agency reports that the Achinskiy Alumina Plant has organized the issue of 1-,3-, and 5-ruble coupons, which are designed to compensate for the lack of cash. While in Moscow the hardest currency at the moment is a subway travel token, which is not subject to devaluation and, not being dependent on exchange rate fluctuations, will always be "worth" one journey.

Steel, Oil, Engineering in Worst Shape

OW1303203492 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1906 GMT 13 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Russia's worst economic problems are in the oil and steel industry, engineering and metal working. Statistics to that effect are contained in a handout to the Russian lawmakers on the social and economic situation in the Russian Federation. Russia has been producing 1 million 118 thousand tons [as received] a day, which is 177 tons less than in February last year. On the whole, oil extraction has declined by 9.5 million tons, or 12 percent of last year's total.

The coal industry has fallen behind, too. In the first two months of the year 61 million tons of coal were mined, 3.2 million (or 5%) less than in the same period last year. The extraction of coking coal was down 1.3 million tons (10%). At the same time, February saw a 5 percent increase in the daily extraction rate as compared with the previous month. Of the 226 essential products of industrial and technical use, 170 were affected by the industrial recession.

Repatriation of Hard Currency Deadline Expires

LD1503223592 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 15 Mar 92

[Report by correspondent I. Vykhukholev; from the "Novosti" newscast presented by Irina Mishina]

[Excerpt] The deadline by which hard currency held by enterprises and private citizens in foreign bank accounts has to be surrendered to the Russian Central Bank expires today. [Video shows Yeltsin addressing a meeting, then view of Russian Central Bank building; interior shots of bank; glimpse of Gaydar addressing a meeting; scenes at a bureau de change which has a "closed" notice up]

[Vykhukholev] This tough measure was announced in a decree which the president of the Russian Federation signed at the end of last year. Holders of illegal foreign bank accounts, i.e., ones opened without permission from the Russian Central Bank, were ordered to repatriate all the funds within three months. Under the decree hard currency which has not been transferred by the deadline becomes the property of the Russian Federation. Such funds will be confiscated and credited to the republic's hard currency reserves.

Very substantial sums may be involved. It has been calculated that last year alone, $6-8 billion were remitted abroad. If the planned operation goes successfully, anything between 7 and 25 billion greenbacks could be repatriated from abroad, according to forecasts made by the Russian Government. [passage omitted]

1,000 Ruble Bank Notes In Circulation

PM1803092792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 14 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 2

[ITAR-TASS report": "Thousand-Ruble Bank Notes in Circulation"]

[Text] Bank notes with a face value of 1,000 rubles [R] have been introduced into circulation since 12 March.

These R1,000 bank notes of the 1991 type together with other bank notes currently in monetary circulation must be accepted at their face value by state, cooperative, public, and other enterprises, establishments, organizations, kolhozes, and individuals in all forms of payment and also by banking establishments and enterprises of the Ministry of Communications for transfer to accounts, deposits, letters of credits, and money orders without any restrictions whatsoever.

Roundtable on State Farming's Plight

PM1703102192 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 13 Mar 92 First Edition p 1

[Yevgeniya Pishchikova "Commentary": "They Might Not Even Sow"]

[Text] The economic reforms, which were meant to stimulate production (including agricultural production), have actually had the opposite results—a reduction in sowing areas and the mass slaughter of livestock. The prevailing situation is as follows: In the space of two months kolkhozes and sovkhozes in practically all oblasts have spent all the profits made on agricultural produce last year and been left without a kopek of money for the sowing campaign.

This fact was the main emotional leitmotiv of the "roundtable" for which representatives of the Council of the Agrarian Union (alias the Kolkhoz Council) and a number of officials, mainly at deputy minister level, gathered at the Ministry of Agriculture—which enabled one kolkhoz chairman to describe the estimable gathering as "sturgeon flesh past its prime" in a private conversation. The business purpose of the discussion was to debate the master contract which is to legitimate the mutual commitments of the two high contracting parties—the Russian Government and the Agrarian Union, which has undertaken to represent the interests of all kolkhozes, sovkhozes, and other formations which have emerged on the basis of them.

Before tackling this serious matter, First Deputy Minister of Agriculture A. Ustyuzhanin, who chaired the meeting, proposed that the kolkhoz leaders discuss the president's 29 February decree "On Measures for the Organized Conduct of Spring Sowing and the Gathering of the Harvest in 1992" and remarked that some questions mentioned in the draft contract in an ultimatum-like manner have already been resolved in the resolution. Representatives of the Agrarian Union and the Kolkhoz Council, however, spoke very coldly of the resolution—they cannot see any real mechanism for implementing it.

Some digression is necessary here. The kolkhozes and sovkhozes really did work for many years to create a staunch image of professional sufferers capable of feeding the country only in the event of all possible state support. They translated their relations with the government from the business sphere to the sphere of social lyricism—it was always necessary to save, revive, and boost the countryside. The demands of the kolkhoz insurgents are now twofold, however—on the one hand, in their draft agreement they demand capital investments from the government "...to the tune of at least 15 percent of the Russian Federation's national income...," whereas on the other hand they are extremely displeased by the fact that they have been forced to go begging for money while the state has not been paying its debts from last year—neither the 150 million foreign currency rubles, nor the compensation for the difference in the prices of agricultural and industrial output during 1991, nor the goods in exchange for "Harvest-90" checks. In the opinion of some kolkhoz chairmen, the state is now doubly indebted to them: Kolkhozes and sovkhozes could become economically independent following a food price hike, if the government ceased to ruin them artificially with a 28-percent tax and a refusal to set competent proportions in the prices of agricultural produce and industrial goods. In the opinion of agrarian leaders, however, the government is afraid of strengthening the economic positions of agricultural producers and is already artificially putting them in a position in which they depend on the authorities and are forced to wait for handouts from them.

This way of putting the question is far from original, although it hardly has a direct bearing on the truth. It must be pointed out that the government really does defend both itself and the consumer against kolkhozes and sovkhozes, but only against them as monopolists. Of course, there is nothing bad about a strong peasantry which is really capable of feeding the country. But it is not wise to let yourselves become hostages of kolkhoz and sovkhoz agrarians—all the same, they will not increase the yield because of the psychological, technological, and other exhaustion of the methods and means of socialized agricultural production and, all the same, there will not be any increase in food.

It seems, however, that the government really has overdone it—food could now disappear altogether.

According to a kolkhoz chairman from Krasnodar, the sowing in his southerly region has already been virtually wrecked. The kray is short of 20,000 tonnes of gasoline and 30,000 tonnes of diesel fuel, and the farms have no money. Of course, the decree promises all the aforesaid, but the chairman frankly cannot understand how the government will provide storage cells, for example, when emissaries from Krasnodar have traveled to all the plants that manufacture them and discovered that they are all standing idle because of a lack of lead.

So, kolkhozes and sovkhozes, already gravely offended by the government's attempt to reform them, greatly distrust the government. Nevertheless, they intend to conclude the contract with it. For them this is essentially an enforced step inspired by the fact that they have been transformed from favorites into pariahs. The favorites, in their opinion, are now the private farmers who, by ensuring a minimum share of the total volume of agricultural production, have made off with a sizable material sum—money and other things that should have actually gone to the kolkhozes and sovkhozes. The attitude of the leaders of the Agrarian Union to private farmers is developing according to a well-known old English formula: I have never wished him ill, I simply want him to fall off the ladder and break his damned neck.

Spring Brings 'Anxiety' to Countryside

PM1303151992 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 12 Mar 92 p 1

[Unattributed report: "Peasants Hoarse From Shouting"]

[Text] Farmers in the south have already started spring field work. But increasingly their peaceful labor is interrupted by the roar of shells and the chatter of automatic fire, and flames lick over their homes.

Are we really unable to rethink, to remember that war brings death and destruction and that people will only be able to survive when peace and justice reign over their homes, when people come to their senses, when people, no longer exposed to danger, are able to sow their fields at the proper time, raise their crop, and harvest it? Have we really succeeded in half-starving ourselves while waiting for humanitarian aid from abroad? Have we really failed to hear through the roar of shells and the crackle of automatic fire the age-long summons of the land awaiting the plowman? Is it really possible that politicians who have lost their head in senseless infighting will not help the peasants discharge their immutable duty to the life-sustaining land and their compatriots, but will, on the contrary, hinder them in this task?

A report reaching PRAVDA says that this kind of anxiety on the part of the inhabitants of the countryside is not without grounds.

Previously, as you will recall, the countryside usually reported by the end of February on the readiness of equipment for spring work, our correspondent Nikolay Kireyev reports from Tula.

This year the situation is depressing. In addition to the terrible shortage of spare parts, you have the confusion felt by people who do not really know who they are—kolkhoz members or leaseholders, private farmers or shareholders... Even "millionaires" like Tula's "Novaya Zhizn" kolkhoz are somewhat at a loss.

"Blatant plundering of the countryside is continuing," V. Danilin, leader of a farm which has now become a peasant association, said with indignation. "Judge for yourself: They demand one tonne of butter for one Kama engine."

Whereas "Novaya Zhizn," despite the chaotic conditions in our "economy," is somehow pulling through (seed has been brought to top sowing condition and all its equipment is at a state of readiness), in other places the situation is desperate. In Tula Oblast as a whole, according to the statistics, thousands of tractors and trucks are still unrepaired.

Many farmers are scratching their heads over something else: What are they going to sow? Some farms have no high-quality seed stock at all. In Belevskiy Rayon you can scoop up the spring wheat in the granary bins in one hand.

The state of affairs in Kaluga is frightening. Around 2,000 tractors, thousands of trucks, and almost one-third of seeders and cultivators are not ready for operation. Only 269 out of 340 farms have a full supply of seed. As in Tula, there is a great shortage of pulse crop seeds.

The peasants are shouting—to the point of hoarseness. But the noise of the cannon is drowning their voices.

Repair Base Refuses To Service Pacific Fleet

LD1803113192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0240 GMT 18 Mar 92

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Palagutin]

[Text] Vladivostok, 18 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—Dalzavod, the Pacific Fleet's main repair base, henceforth will not service warships. The enterprise's administration explains its refusal to cooperate with naval seamen as due to the chronic breakdown of the fleet's payments for repair work.

"Since the beginning of the year, the Pacific Fleet's debts to Dalzavod have grown to about 100 million rubles," Dalzavod's deputy general director Sergey Kucherenko said. "This is an excessive burden for the enterprise, which today is compelled to carry big expenses to pay for energy, parts, materials, and so forth. We understand that in the situation that has emerged the fleet is least of all to blame, but in market conditions we cannot do charity work. The ship repair spaces freed from military orders will be offered to fishing fleet vessels."

Kalugin Doubts Reform in Security Services

LD1103184192 Moscow Radio Moscow in French 1700 GMT 10 Mar 92

[Excerpts from interview with Oleg Kalugin, retired KGB general, with unidentified correspondent; place and date not given; Kalugin in Russian fading into French report—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Correspondent] Now you are going to hear an interview with Oleg Kalugin, a retired KGB general who has disclosed some of this service's secrets in different publications, for which he was nearly taken to court.

Recently the press has reported on the big changes within the KGB: Is it true?—a question for Oleg Kalugin:

[Kalugin] In my opinion, the reforms planned for the state security service have in fact been suspended today. Only the first few steps have been taken in this direction. There is no doubt that today the KGB is no longer what it was, its structures have been dismantled and new autonomous organizations have been created—one might say that this monster, which existed for 70 years no longer exists, but this is just an outward appearance.

I believe that, having destroyed the system, we have left the spirit of this service intact, its corporate internal climate, which resisted the democratic reforms, said Oleg Kalugin. It did everything possible to preserve the old system and ensure its viability. It is said that the current security services are in the vanguard of perestroyka, or close to it—this is true only if one sees perestroyka as an attempt to change the facade and not to change the essence of the system.

The next question: three or four years ago, Oleg Kalugin spoke about the need for major changes among the top officials of the KGB. He said that the positions of responsibility in this service belong to reactionaries:

[Kalugin] These people are still working in the service, says Oleg Kalugin. They have not disappeared. If you imagine that it was enough to put three or four putschists in prison to destroy the system then you are wrong. Thousands of agents today are nostalgic about the past, and not just in the state security services. They remain in the system of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, which has been dismantled but retains its roots. They also sit in the Supreme Soviet—that is why I do not think that the state security services have undergone radical change, says Oleg Kalugin.

It should be pointed out in this connection that the hearings concerning the role of the KGB in the August putsch ended recently in parliament. Many are not satisfied with the results of these, although they revealed the facts mentioned right away by Oleg Kalugin:

[Kalugin] On this level, the hearings were useful, says Oleg Kalugin; they revealed once again the depths of the arbitrariness in which the security services indulged, even during the last seven years, under the cover of reforms, under the watchwords of perestroyka—they were in fact confronted with perestroyka and democracy. The facts showed once again that this service has not been broken and represents a serious potential threat to the democratic processes in the country.

However, it should be said that the reduction of the staff in the security services has begun and their numbers have decreased substantially.

[Kalugin] The numbers have decreased, that is true, admits Oleg Kalugin, but this process must be more active. The service must be brought up to date and the spirit of Stalinism and Brezhnevism instilled in thousands of people must be eradicated. The faster we get rid of it, the calmer our society will be. [passage omitted]

Poll Shows More Trust in Yeltsin Than His Team

LD1303132892 Moscow TASS in English 1151 GMT 13 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow March 13 TASS—Russians trust their President Boris Yeltsin more than his team, according to an opinion poll conducted by the Russian Parliament in seven regions of the republic late in February.

Fifty-four per cent of those polled do not believe Yeltsin's team will succeed, the survey by a sociological group of the parliament's subcommittee for public opinion studies revealed. About 42 per cent said they trust Yeltsin personally. Boris Yeltsin is more popular among elderly people, than among the middle-aged.

Yeltsin's active supporters are least adhered to democracy, according to sociologists.

Only 20 per cent of those surveyed blamed democrats for current difficulties and 42 per cent put the blame on the "former Communist regime".

There is increasing polarization in society: It is more or less evenly split into "democrats" and "rightwingers".

Poll Reveals Trust in Gaydar Increasing

OW1203055892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0516 GMT 12 Mar 92

[From "Viewpoint"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] On March 7-8 the National Public Opinion Studies Center (VCIOM) took a survey among 1,038 respondents in 13 Russian cities asking them whom of the Yeltsin team they trust most of all. Here are the results (%):

Rutskoy	15
Khasbulatov	13
Gaydar	11
Burbulis	6
Shaposhnikov	4
Shakhray	4

32% said they do not trust any of the above mentioned men. 18% were undecided. Notably, last January only 4% of those polled trusted the Russian vice-president. Thus, a number of Gaydar's supporters grew by 7%, the Data news agency reports.

'Chance' for Surviving Reforms Peacefully Eyed

924C0905A Moscow KURANTY in Russian No 44, 5 Mar 92 p 4

[Interview with Yuri Levada, manager of the All-Union Central Institute for the Study of Public Opinion, by KURANTY correspondent Nikolay Kuznetsov; place and date not given: "There Is a Chance of Surviving All of This Peacefully"]

[Text] **The liberalization of prices, but more properly their inflation, has led to extraordinarily high prices for goods, and at times for the most essential products. The quality of**

nourishment has worsened for practically all people. The prestige of political institutions and their leaders is falling. Privatization is moving along an incomprehensible and intricate path against the background of "hungry pots" and hysterical outcries of social catastrophe. Will our society avoid massive conflicts this time? Will not those who are frightened by the difficulties turn away from the path or reform? Yuriy Levada, the manager of VCIOM [All-Union Central Institute for the Study of Public Opinion] believes that there is a chance of surviving all of this peacefully.

Our Information. VCIOM is the All-Union Central Institute for the Study of Public Opinion. It has been in operation since the beginning of 1988. It has 25 branches on the entire territory of Russia and the former republics of the USSR. The branches work according to a single technology, the staffs are manned by professional sociologists and well-trained interviewers, and they are equipped with computers, facsimile units, modems, and Xerox machines. Owing to this, VCIOM can conduct a wide spectrum of research on diverse themes in a compressed timeframe: politics, culture, religion, morality, national and internal relations, and other themes. This unique "brain" center (we have no analogs) determined beforehand the trend in the fall of M.S. Gorbachev, the crash of the CPSU, and the breakup of the USSR. The number of voters who would vote for B. Yeltsin in the elections was determined accurately in advance. Until recently, the analysis collective was supervised by Academician T. Zaslavskaya, and, today, it is supervised by Yuriy Levada, one of the eminent sociologists of Russia. Considering the alarming situation in Russia and the enormous role of VCIOM in predicting various social processes, our correspondent asked Yu. Levada to give us an assessment of what is happening.

[Kuznetsov] Tell me, can an outburst of popular indignation occur in the next few months, which certain political leaders and some of your colleagues are predicting?

[Levada] I think that we have a chance of peacefully surviving difficulties that are associated with the implementation of economic reform. A role is played here by an intricate complex of such factors as the traditional patience of the Russian people, society's understanding of the need for reform, and the absence of any kind of an alternative. Although there can be local flare-ups.

[Kuznetsov] But, after all, the patience of the Russian people is also not unlimited....

[Levada] You cannot say. It can be very prolonged, paradoxical, and at times...immoral, although a lot of things can be justified. Analysis of Russian history shows that in Russia there were no kind of mass social outbursts and great uprisings at any time—neither under the cruelest, nor under the best tsars. Incidentally, there were none in 1917 either. The Bolsheviks artfully attributed the events of that time to the "fury of the masses."

[Kuznetsov] Perhaps anything that is advantageous can be done with us as previously?

[Levada] I think that now everything is somewhat different. From the very beginning of the agitation of society in the middle of the 1980's, many expected a social upheaval, a kind of spontaneous rebellion, and there was a fear that the "masses" would fall under the influence of some kind of black reactionary forces. However, during the course of research, we discovered that the people of Russia were more sensible, reasonable, and democratic than could be expected.

The patience of the Russian people today has acquired another quality, because now there is an element of UNDERSTANDING in it that has rooted itself in recent years in the mass consciousness, together with an orientation on democracy, and together with the hope of a better life. Perhaps it is for this reason that there is a greater degree of calmness among the people than might be expected.

[Kuznetsov] Yuriy Aleksandrovich, and if the government and President B. Yeltsin resign?

[Levada] I already talked about the absence of any alternative. First of all, the people have no choice, when political figures are considered. Who today can realistically claim the leadership in directing the state? M. Gorbachev's star, it seems, has waned decisively. His co-movers and co-builders, such as A. Yakovlev and E. Shevardnadze, have also receded into the shadows. And when we ask the population whether these people can return to power, those who are polled say "no." True, few people are now praying for Yeltsin. His prestige has dropped somewhat: While previously he was supported by 60-70 percent of the population, today it is plus or minus 40 percent. Nonetheless, this is incomparably more than anyone else has. Indeed, the people do not want anyone else. To the question as to whether the people want B. Yeltsin to retire, 70 percent answer that they do not want this. The same in Moscow. The prestige of G. Popov has dropped; however, as soon as there was talk about his resignation—50 percent of the Muscovites expressed themselves against this. The results of our research indicate: No bright new star can be seen rising on the political horizon at present. Incidentally, the interest of the people in parliament, the deputies, and politics continues to fall in general.

There is also no popular political movement capable of putting forth a precise and clear program of activity and gathering under its banners a significant number of activists and conducting a successful struggle for power within the scope of the law. The democrats are weakened and split. The communists and their ambitious ilk are few in number, and I do not consider the others.

In addition, there is also no alternative to the program started by Ye. Gaydar. There are many who do not agree with his actions, which are being criticized in the press, in parliament, and in the administration of the president; however, analysis shows that they cannot propose anything that is persuasive. The polls show that the people (54 percent) criticize only specific shortcomings of the leadership of Russia, that 12 percent fully support it and are ready to promote the policy that is being conducted, and that 18 percent of those polled demand the resignation of the leadership of Russia. Therefore, today there are only two social poles—the PEOPLE and the AUTHORITIES. And there are no other real challengers to this authority.

For that reason, the people are patient, understanding that there is no other way, and they hope for the best.

[Kuznetsov] And, nevertheless, you said that local social flare-ups are possible, and you also noted that the Bolsheviks in their time skillfully took advantage of such flare-ups. What if suddenly this year the Reds exploit such a local conflict as disorders at stores, strikes, and the like? Will our descendants in such a case have to read in the history books on Russia (or the USSR) about the "national fury?" And, after all, the old elite—the nomenklatura and its successors—succeeded in hiding a lot of resources in commercial structures and can use them for the organization of similar measures. By the way, they are showing themselves, publishing newspapers of a specific content that influence the public consciousness. That is, they are conducting single-minded work...

[Levada] But recall the recent marches of the "hungry pots." This was obviously organized by the Reds. But demonstrations and manifestations—this is still far from an outburst of popular indignation. No, the communists have so discredited themselves, and the people treat them with such loathing that they have extremely few chances of winning popularity and taking power in a legal way.

Only 15 percent believe that they can once again become a real force, and 61 percent of those polled reject this. They are also unable to arrange social flare-ups—which are rather complicated and delicate things. Moreover, I think that they are simply afraid to do this.

The influence of anticommunist forces, mixed with populism and extremism, could be more effective and dangerous. It is appearing here and there. The bearers of this spirit, for example, are V. Zhirinovskiy's voters. This petty person made points during the elections for president precisely because of rabid anticommunism.

[Kuznetsov] Is an attempt to cease power on the part of the military possible? With respect to the actions of the president of Russia, representatives of this social group are split in two, in contrast to other sections of the population in which a majority of the votes still belong to B. Yeltsin.

[Levada] Our specialists gauged the moods in the army during the All-Army Conference. These moods are rather gloomy, but, in my opinion, there is no attempt either to subvert or to take power. There is an element of discipline in the army, and there is the element of human reason. But, again, there is no alternative.

[Kuznetsov] Does this mean that there is no powerful factor today that is capable of destabilizing society?

[Levada] If there is, it has not been developed yet. We all grumble, but we understand that it is impossible to turn back, that it is necessary to integrate with Europe, and that it is necessary to receive assistance from the West (especially the kind that will help change the country qualitatively). It is just that all of us, including the press, need something else also: more political culture, care, discretion, and tact. I will note, incidentally, that, according to our data, the newspaper KURANTY is becoming more and more popular, and that its quality is improving.

Citizens Queried on Threats to Democratic Reform

OW1703102392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0658 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From "Viewpoint"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] **Does Communism Pose a Threat to Russian Democracy?**

According to the Data news agency, a March 14-15 survey by the National Public Opinion Studies Center and the "Public Opinion" Foundation among 1057 respondents in 13 Russian cities showed that 39% believe the existing communist movements and parties pose no threat to democratic reforms in Russia.

34% of those polled have an opposite opinion.

The rest were undecided.

Margin of error—3%.

Is Economic Reform in Russia Successful?

4 in 10 participants in the same poll said economic reform in Russia is carried out with little success.

28% said the reform had failed.

12% said the republic has not seen any reforms.

Only 5% of those polled consider the reform process to be sucessful. The rest were undecided. Margin of error—3%.

Subscribers Fail To Receive GLASNOST

PM1703155392 Moscow SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA in Russian 17 Mar 92 p 2

[Unattributed report: "Why GLASNOST Did Not Appear"]

[Text] Last Thursday [12 March] subscribers did not receive the latest issue of the weekly GLASNOST. Its modest budget failed to withstand the rise in prices for paper and printing costs. But the break in production will not last long. Financial support from readers, the receipt of delayed payments from subscriptions and from the retail trade for the publication of advertising copy, as well as an increase in the retail price will ensure sufficient resources for the newspaper to continue publication until the end of the year without increasing the subscription price.

Correction on Text of Defense Ministry Decree

LD1803121592

The following correction pertains to the item headlined "'Text' of Decree on Defense Ministry Released", published in the 17 March Central Eurasia DAILY REPORT, page 31.

Column one, paragraph eight, only sentence, make read: ...functions of the minister of defense are to be temporarily... (correcting "ministry" to "minister")

Regional Affairs

Rally in Moscow Draws 'Around 70,000'

LD1703180192

[Editorial Report] Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian at 1600 GMT on 17 March, during its regularly scheduled newscast, carries a 3.5-minute report by correspondent Aleksandr Ruvinskiy on the scheduled pro-Communist rally in Moscow's Manezh Square.

Ruvinskiy begins by noting that although militia estimates put the crowd at "around 50,000" at the start of the protest, numbers increased somewhat in the following 30 minutes to "around 70,000."

Ruvinskiy says of rally participants: "Above all, this was, of course, the whole flower of our former Party apparat—of Moscow, Moscow oblast, and from some adjacent oblasts, I think." Rally organizers announced that 2,000 guests had arrived from other towns, Ruvinskiy points out, adding: "From what I could gather, around one-third of the Manezh Square crowd simply included people with nothing better to do, who came looking for an interesting spectacle."

He then notes that "the people speaking from the platform are mostly those who consider themselves defenders of Russia. Gennadiy Zyuganov said that everything in our country—at least in the Russian Federation—takes place exclusively according to scenarios written by transatlantic experts. Zyuganov is chairman of the coordination council of the Patriotic Forces of Russia." Ruvinskiy then says: "I would unashamedly call the things that were said from the platform simply a load of nonsense. For instance, it was said that a decree was signed allowing children to be snatched from absent-minded mothers waiting in queues for sale abroad and that girls in St. Petersburg are corrupted especially for the entertainment of Western congressmen." Ruvinskiy points out that "delegates of the now-ended Congress of People's Deputies talked about its 90-minute proceedings. They included Vavila Nosov, deputy chairman of the organizing committee, who said that a decision had been made to the effect that three military men—Makashov, Chernavin, and Colonel General Kruglov—now had to put things in order on USSR territory. The trouble is I couldn't work out whether he meant the decision was adopted at the congress or not."

Ruvinskiy concludes the report by saying that "everything was calm" as of 1530 GMT and that "no excesses could be observed as far as I could see."

[Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian at 1500 GMT on 17 March, during its regularly scheduled "Novosti" newscast, carries the following report on the rally, including video footage of a crowd of people standing in Red Square holding up banners: "Let's now return to the story with which we began today's bulletin. We just received the film with pictures taken during the rally. Now, we cannot only tell you about it but also show you what is happening. I remind you that the Moscow militia says that about 50,000 people have so far gathered for the rally. Order during the Manezh Square rally has been ensured in the following way: The entrance from the GUM side has been closed, and access from the Kremlin Wall has been restricted, as the leadership of the Moscow militia warned earlier. As a precaution, Manezh Square, where the rally is expected to be held over the course of a few hours, has been cordoned off. However, as you can see, it appears that everything is going fairly quietly."]

Various Speakers Address Crowd

LD1803140292 Moscow POSTFACTUM in English 1013 GMT 18 Mar 92

[From the "Politics" section]

[Text] Moscow—Popular veche (assembly), organized by Working Russia Movement, was held in Moscow, on March 17.

There have been different estimates of the number of participants in the meeting (assembly) provided by journalists, militia and organizers of the meeting: approximately 50 thousand, some 100-150 thousand and 350 thousand persons, respectively. The meeting decided to draft impeachment to President Yeltsin and to this end to collect 1 mln. [million] signatures in support of electing a new head of state. General Albert Makashov's candidature has been proposed as an alternative to Boris Yeltsin. In his address to the meeting the general made a promise to act in accordance with the oath, taken 35 years ago: to whip all traitors at the elevated place. Makashov also declared his intention to take any other post, just to sweep all that garbage, accumulated for seven years, away from the state. Participants in the meeting expressed their support to peoples' deputies of the former USSR, who had held the sixth extraordinary congress in Moscow region, on March 17. Following the statements by Yelena Lukiyanova and Angelina Schenina, the meeting demanded to release SEC's [State of Emergency Committee] members from Matrosskaya Tishina prison. Participants decided to start collecting signatures in support of recalling and bringing to trial Moscow's Mayor Gavriil Popov, demanded to provide daily 15-minute TV time for patriots and to prevent adopting a bourgeois constitution of Russia. Sergey Gubanov, a theorist of political economy of socialism, made an appeal to answer to reformers by people's war and to solve the question of power from below.

Emigrant writer Eduard Limonov said, in part: people have a moral right for a rebellion, a revolution against the anti-popular government. Participants of the rally approved a mandate to a future government, in particular, calling it to stop the price rise and lower prices of the basic consumer commodities to the 1985 level, impose control of the people, Armed Forces and law enforcement agencies over all food stocks, prevent a dissolution of collective and state farms, reassert the inviolability of the decree on land, prevent export of strategic resources out of the country, nationalize the entire bank system, carry out a radical monetary reform protecting labor savings, suspend privatization of lodgings and start elaboration of a five-year plan.

A presidium was elected to organize and hold rallies similar to this popular assembly, its membership announced to comprise Albert Makashov, Aleksandr Nevzorov, Viktor Anpilov, Amangeldiy Tuleev, Vavil Nosov, Viktor Ilyukhin, Vladimir Miloserdov and Stanislav Gurenko, former first secretary of the Ukrainian Communist Party.

Following the rally (popular assembly), Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the Liberal Democratic Party of the Soviet Union, addressed rally participants. Valeriy Skurlatov organized registration of volunteers willing to assist the Dnestr area, i.e. participate in picketing actions, write protests or go to the site.

Chechen Communist Forms Government in Exile

LD1703122292 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1100 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] According to the Chechen news agency, Zavgayev, the former chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Chechen-Ingush Republic and first secretary of the Chechen-Ingush CPSU Oblast Committee, has formed in Moscow an alternative government of Checheno-Ingushetia. Former Chechen leading party personalities are members of this government. The government in exile has close ties with the opposition within the Chechen Republic, and coordinates their activities.

Dudayev on Historic Struggle for Independence

AU1203121592 Lvov ZA VILNU UKRAYINU in Ukrainian 22 Feb 92 pp 1,2

[Interview with Dzhakhar Dudayev, president of the Chechen Republic, by Mariya Bazelyuk in Groznyy; date not given: "It Is So Good To Be Independent!"]

[Text] **"How do you do, Mr. President," [passage published in Russian] I said entering Dzhokhar Dudayev's study.**

"Greetings! How are things in Ukraine?" The president of the Chechen Republic spoke in Ukrainian....

It turned out that when he was in the Army, he served in Poltava and has acquired many Ukrainian friends....

Dzhakhar Dudayev was born in 1944—in the year of terror against his nation, when, on Stalin's order, the Chechen people were expelled from their own land into exile. At the end of the fifties, the Dudayev family returned from Kazakhstan to their homeland. In Groznyy, Dzhakhar finished secondary school, a vocational and technical school, and then an aviation school and a military academy. He served in strategic aviation. In March 1991, when he was a major general, he chose to resign from the post of the chief of Tartu [in Estonia] garrison. He is married and has three children.

On 27 October 1991, he was elected president of the Chechen Republic. His name is closely associated with the national revolution of the Chechen people, a revolution that proceeded without bloodshed, notwithstanding the fact that pressure, including military pressure, on the part of Russia was very strong. The operation against Moscow's aggression that was brilliantly accomplished by Dudayev ended without any casualties or bloodshed. As is known, on 8 November, Yeltsin signed a decree on introducing the state of emergency on the territory of the Chechen-Ingush Republic. In response, Dzhakhar Dudayev declared martial law in the republic, and within three hours, the National Guard took upon itself the defense of roads, airports, and communications. On the next day, eight planes with OMON [special purpose militia detachment] soldiers arrived in Groznyy. They were allowed to land, and then were blocked by the National Guard troops and not allowed to get out of the aircraft. For two days, the Chechens brought food to the soldiers right to the planes, then sent them to Russia on "Ikarus" buses, while the planes remained in Groznyy—just in case....The failure of the imperial aspirations became a triumph for the people who firmly chose the road toward independence and, I am sure, will not swerve from it.

The Chechen people are building their own state with all its attributes—an army, national currency, and the customs borders. That is why their attitude toward Ukraine is very favorable; they attentively follow our state-building processes and look forward to further development of traditionally friendly relations between our peoples. The recognition by Ukraine of the Chechen Republic's independence would only amount to stating the known fact, and we must find courage to make this step without looking back at Yeltsin and his team. Russia will repeatedly threaten us with expansion and unpredictable actions taken by unbalanced politicians. Ukraine, for its part, needs reliable allies, also for the purpose of defending itself from the dangerous neighbor who is suffering from

imperial and chauvinist ambitions. This theme was also sounded in the conversation with Dzhakhar Dudayev.

[Bazelyuk] There appeared in Ukraine the notion of "the phenomenon of Dudayev"—a leader dedicated to the interests of his nation, one who consistently defends its rights, a talented organizer and a courageous person. What did you feel when the leadership of the national liberation movement of the Chechen people was offered to you?

[Dudayev] I was sure that this moment would come, I looked forward to it my whole conscious life, and I lived with a single dream: To emerge from the infamous situation in which human dignity was trampled upon, a situation in which my people lived. I was obsessed with the idea of struggling for the independence of my people and believed that this struggle would be successful. Of course, I wanted to avoid bloodshed and prepared to proceed, step by step, on the basis of international law, proceeding from the principles of democracy, and in a legal manner, toward independence. It was my dream, my dream, and my life—everything. We were destined to wage a difficult struggle, but the road that we have chosen has turned out to be correct. Political terrorism, military actions, and provocations raised to the rank of state policy were imposed upon us. The more we adhered to legal methods in our policy, the more blunders were made by Russian structures of power that later resorted to spiritual and physical coercion and open armed actions aimed at annihilating the Chechen people.

[Bazelyuk] Mr. President, your people deserve admiration: They do not succumb to slavery or coercion. According to witnesses—my compatriots—even in exile, the Chechens did not allow people to abuse them and did not lose their pride. Where, do you think, do these features originate?

[Dudayev] You see, the genetic code takes shape in struggle. For more than 300 years, the Chechens have been fighting for their freedom. Historians must, obviously, admit that the world civilization does not know a more steadfast opposition to conquerors than the struggle that the Chechens and generally the Caucasian peoples waged against Russia. This struggle was not crowned by anybody's victory, but was only temporarily halted. In 1864, the terms of the truce agreement with Russia were as follows: The Chechens have a right to their own independence and religion and to carry weapons, do not pay any taxes to the Tsar's treasury, and do not serve in the Tsar's army. Of course, the borders that were drawn infringed upon the interests of the Chechens. Russia did not fulfill the conditions and the opposition resumed. In 1877, another truce was signed and Russia again did not adhere to its conditions and continued its military aggression. In 1918, the Chechens created their own state, which was even recognized by Russia, as well as by Turkey, Germany, France, and Great Britain. In 1921, our statehood was destroyed physically, and the government emigrated to France. Even after that, Russia immediately divided our lands in its own way, never asking the Chechens' consent and not allowing them to express their will. However, the Soviet Government did not succeed in carrying out its plans to subdue Checheniya. Then, in 1938 and 1939, repressions resumed and continued until the beginning of World War II, which the Chechens took part in and were given high awards. However, the empire preferred to hush this up. Documents are now known that attest to Moscow's plans to annihilate the Chechen people. One such "program" provided for drowning the Chechens in the Caspian Sea after driving them onto rafts and into trains. In 1944, Moscow decided to annihilate our nation completely and committed a grave crime against humanity. The men were in the Army. Troops entered the territory of Checheniya on the pretext that they had returned from the front and needed rest. The Chechens received them, as the laws of hospitality obliged, and provided them with warmth and food. The military lived in our houses, and the trusting people asked them whether they had met their brothers, husbands, or fathers at the front. They lived with the families for about two weeks and then, at four o'clock in the morning, they ordered everybody who could move to get up, leaving behind feeble old people, the sick, and the children, allegedly so that they should keep up the homes. The former were taken to Siberia and Kazakhstan and thrown from freight trains right in the middle of the steppe, while the latter were killed on the spot or burned alive. This is the destiny that has befallen us.

[Bazelyuk] The Chechen Republic has proclaimed its sovereignty. What are the problems that you have to deal with while establishing your statehood?

[Dudayev] We have an independent state, whether Russia wants it or not. This is already enough. There is no way back. The Chechens were never a part of Russia and, therefore, they are not seceding from it. We, on our land, have defended our right to independence at the cost of enormous losses. Now, there are various insinuations being made against us, for example, that we are going to demand the oath of allegiance from the troops stationed on the territory of the Chechen Republic. This is a fabrication because there was no such order. I think that the insinuations have been prompted by annoyance because there are no legal arguments against us. For that reason, Russia resorts to attempts to accuse our state structure of being a bandit and aggressive in character, something that is allegedly typical of Chechens. Such insinuations are absolutely groundless. We are building a constitutional, democratic, and civilized state.

[Bazelyuk] An independent state needs an army of its own.

[Dudayev] Yes, it does. That is why we will take the oath of allegiance from our sons. We have our own military structures. We will return to the traditional Chechen guarding system. Every house, every village, every town, and the entire republic constitute a single stronghold and a single fortress.

[Bazelyuk] They say that every Chechen is a soldier.

[Dudayev] There was a custom in our history in accordance with which three months after the birth of a boy he was given to another family for upbringing, so that he could be raised as a soldier. At the age of seven, he was returned to his own home battle-hardened. He passed his first exam as a soldier and since that time joined the reserve or the active army service—as a guard or a guide. Freedom is a costly commodity.

[Bazelyuk] Neither you nor your people will live in isolation. How do you see the economic, political, and cultural interrelations between Ukraine and the Chechen Republic? In your opinion, in what way could we help you in the near future and you help us?

[Dudayev] The prospects are quite realistic and varied. At the given stage, Ukraine and the Chechen Republic are united by close economic relations. An oil-pipe and foodstuffs distribution line cross Ukraine. They constitute a vitally important energy resource without which not a single republic of the former Union can exist. This is an important factor. Roads, close borders, direct contacts, and, of course, similar fates are also important. As you know, the character and the execution of defense actions by Cossacks and Chechens were similar. The structure of the Ukrainian Cossack army and the Chechen home guard was the same, and the character of combat actions, weapons, and even tactics are, as a matter of fact, the same, notwithstanding the fact that the Cossacks were active largely in the steppe, and the Chechens—in the mountains.

[Bazelyuk] Since you are well read in the history of Ukraine, I would like to ask you whether you know anything about the national liberation struggle of our people in the forties and fifties. Incidentally, Chechens also fought in the ranks of the Ukrainian Insurrection Army.

[Dudayev] Of course I know about this. I pay high tribute to the struggle of the Ukrainian people. It is as heroic and as sacrificing as that of the Chechens. It was especially western Ukraine that never gave up its struggle for the nation's right to independence and that showed selfless courage in the liberation movement. I studied national liberation processes in Ukraine, I have many acquaintances there, especially in western regions. I could feel with my heart that Ukrainians have always been psychologically ready for the independence that they have now achieved; they have every possibility for building a strong state.

[Bazelyuk] Are there preconditions for creating a strong coalition of states in the Caucasus?

[Dudayev] There are such preconditions. I am absolutely convinced that we can create a strong Caucasian home on a confederation basis, a home in which the interests of no people will be infringed upon—those who are stronger will support the weaker ones and will, first and foremost, take into account the interests of the latter. **One must not fail to fulfill the laws of God and the laws of nature. Those people who adhere to them do good, and those who digress from them and oppose them do so thoughtlessly. This will certainly lead to the worst consequences, which will be manifested in the next generations.** What is happening to the empire? It is disintegrating like a house of cards, and those people on whose lands the empire expanded its possessions are suffering the most.

[Bazelyuk] The former Central Television is constantly spreading information suggesting the Chechens have serious conflicts with the Ingush. As far as I am concerned, this is not so.

[Dudayev] It is very good that you know about this. I also know that we have no such conflicts. It is true that there are many provocations aimed at inciting conflicts between our peoples. All of this issues from Moscow. It fuels passions, because it wants to do so. Neither the Chechens nor the Ingush will ever initiate an armed conflict. The Ingush are able to take care of themselves. The people must convene a congress and make their choice. This is the only legal act that makes it possible to establish one's statehood. If the Ingush people choose their way together with Russia, then the questions of borders will also be resolved only on the basis of bilateral negotiations. We and the Ingush have the same fate. Nobody must be in our way or charge the atmosphere.

[Bazelyuk] Are these the doings of the third force?

[Dudayev] Yes. I declare again before the whole world that these are Russia's doings and the continuation of its chauvinist policy. Of course, Russia resents both the president of Georgia and my statements. "You are putting all the blame upon that 'Moscow hand' of yours," they say. Yes, it is Russia, yes, it is the hand of Moscow that nurtures and takes care of chauvinists and partocrats. There are always certain people in a nation who become Moscow's puppets. The policy of Russia with regard to the Chechens has always been particularly cruel, even that farce with the renewal of the autonomy. It was a continuation of genocide. The Chechens who lived in exile were given four hours to get organized; they were put in cattle cars—although we had paid enormous sums of money—and again, like in 1944, we were thrown in the field far away from railroad stations. We found ourselves in our fatherland, but we were robbed, without any means of existence, and to this day, we cannot emerge from this misfortune. We have the world's highest percentage of tuberculosis patients, the lowest life expectancy in the region, and lawlessness. The militia received instructions from Moscow to shoot the Chechens on the spot.

[Bazelyuk] There still are imperial forces in Russia that continue thinking in the categories of the nonexistent Union. It cannot be ruled out that we will have to defend ourselves from Moscow's aggression. If such a situation arises, how do you see joint actions to be undertaken by Ukraine and Checheniya?

[Dudayev] We must act jointly in order to avoid bloodshed. I generally reject methods of struggle that lead to this, because this is contrary to the laws of nature. A forecast, a comprehensive political analysis, and compromise can always prevent aggression. It is now necessary to unite, without delay, all those forces that have become liberated from the Union. One should not be afraid to recognize the independence of those peoples that have chosen the road toward building their own states. We are proud people and, of course, we do not impose ourselves upon anybody. However, proceeding from the actual situation, Ukraine could even now recognize the Chechen Republic, and so could Belarus. Recognition could become the factor on the basis of which we could coordinate our actions. Then, the world would be able to see that peoples can really unite instead of looking up to Russia and the apologists of the former empire and that they are not scared of the threats but proceed along their own way and recognize this right as pertaining to other peoples as well. To recognize the right of another—this is a very high value. Mutual relations between Ukraine and Checheniya could be based upon strong economic ties, permanent political consultations on various problems, joint statements of warning, and consolidation [konsolidatsiya]. In short, a whole complex of actions that could oppose the savage methods and physical coercion with which we are still being threatened. The events in Georgia are also Moscow's conspiracy and an example of how recalcitrance can be punished. Russia is setting people against people without realizing that the same fate may also befall it quite soon. The legitimately elected president and parliament of Georgia are, all of a sudden, attacked by a group of armed people; they are armed with phosphoric charges [fosforni zaryady] that are generally banned in the civilized world. At the same time, Russia disseminates disinformation and mainly encourages those who do harm to the independence of their own people. In Georgia, purely military groupings have staged a mutiny, and Russian politicians are supporting their actions. Rallies in support of the president are being held throughout Georgia, including Tbilisi. The new "democracy" has revealed its true face. Thirty people were arrested during the very first days. A peaceful demonstration is held. Shots are heard—women fall. In what other country is this possible?

[Bazelyuk] What force had to interfere to make Georgians shoot Georgians?

[Dudayev] Russian instructors. Our people visited Georgia. There was the minister of foreign affairs, then a parliamentary group that met with the president and with representatives of both sides, including the opposition, although what kind of opposition is it? An opposition must have a platform, a political platform, a goal, and tasks. The people who are calling themselves the opposition are only striving to hurt others as badly as possible. Everywhere there are opposition parties headed by talented politicians who act in a constructive manner, take part in the struggle for parliamentary seats, and have their own face in political activity. Here, all of a sudden, there emerges a group of armed people who only strive to overthrow the legitimately elected president.

[Bazelyuk] In conclusion, what do you want to say to the people of Ukraine?

[Dudayev] You know, without exaggeration, my attitude toward the Ukrainian people is very warm. When, after 15 years of military service in Siberia, we arrived in Poltava, Ukrainian women came up to our children right in the street and said: "Oh my child, come to me, I'll give you an apple." The people are very kind, especially the older ones, old women. Our life among the Ukrainians was very comfortable, we never felt any hostility. On the contrary, we the Chechens were treated with special kindness. I have many friends among the Ukrainians, and the history of your people has always interested me. I like Ukraine for its high culture of everyday life and social relations and for its aesthetic customs and deep-seated spirituality. I wish the Ukrainian people complete independence—for this is the eternal struggle and dream of your nation and the only reliable prospect of a happy future.

[Bazelyuk] Thank you for your kind words.

Kaliningrad Head Denies German Region Created

LD1703173592 Moscow TASS in English 1559 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Biryukov]

[Text] Kaliningrad March 17—A report by the Russian television and radio that the head of the Kaliningrad administration had agreed to the settlement of 200 thousand ethnic Germans in the Kaliningrad region was refuted on Tuesday [17 March] by regional chief Yuriy Matochkin. He told the press that such an agreement did not exist. He summed up the administration's position saying: "We are not against settlement of Russian Germans in the Kaliningrad region as ordinary citizens, but we cannot agree with their resettlement en masse, let alone with the creation of a national autonomy of ethnic Germans in the region". The administration asked the directorate of the Russian television and radio broadcasting company to investigate this fact of misinformation.

The region's administration reacted so sharply for the reason that although its attitude has been stated more than once, the question is broached almost weekly by some or other news organisation.

Russia's western region is quite densely populated. It has a population of over 900 thousand. It can accept only several thousand settlers, regardless of nationality, and then only to fill vacancies in rural areas.

German Leader on 'Insulting' Autonomy Plan

PM1703112592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 13 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 5

[Undated letter from A. Vize, chairman of the Semipalatinsk Oblast "Wiedergeburt" ("Rebirth") Society, under the "From the International Departments' Mailbag" rubric: "Has the Russian Germans' Problem Been Resolved?"]

[Text] Semipalatinsk—Has the Russian Germans' problem of returning to their former places of residence really been suddenly resolved? Hundreds of thousands of Germans who settled separately throughout the vast expanses of Siberia, Central Asia, and Kazakhstan are being invited to live permanently in Ukraine, or to be precise, the Crimea.

This was stated by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk during his visit to Bonn. It is thought that in this case politicians in Kiev proved manifestly more farsighted than their Moscow colleagues and that "agriculture has the chance to receive a powerful 'stimulus': an army of workers who are disciplined and have not lost the taste for order and a sober way of life."

It can be said with complete certainty that (Semipalatinsk) Oblast's German population regards this statement as a political device which does not accord with either history or the specific situation.

Let us turn to the facts.

Yes, the first German colonists from Danzig and West Prussia appeared in "Novorossiya" (South Ukraine) in 1785. But the autonomous republic was not here but in the Volga region. Therefore I want to remind President Kravchuk that the demand to restore the republic on the Volga is not nostalgia for the past but the German people's striving to establish historical justice, full rehabilitation (including territorial rehabilitation), and the need to have their own administration and political and cultural center, which would guarantee the preservation of their ethnic community, language, and culture.

The president seems to have forgotten that the Crimea is itself the subject of differences between Russia and Ukraine. The deported Crimean Tatar people are laying claim to this very territory, and not without justification. On the other hand, hardly anybody will be able to take up this invitation until the question has been resolved legislatively, that is, until the Ukrainian authorities have determined the newcomers' status and given specific guarantees. After all, there have already been such "invitations" from Ulyanovsk, Kaliningrad, and Saratov. In almost all cases the matter has ended with the newcomers being left completely to their own devices and returning.

But maybe Kravchuk wanted to boost his image in Germany with this statement and to obtain sorely needed investments and support or, worse than that, to annoy the Russian president. Be that as it may, the German people do not wish to be a pawn or a bagatelle in relations between states, or a hostage in political games.

In conclusion, a few words about Russian President Yeltsin's statement in Saratov. This question was discussed at an oblast and city meeting of the "Rebirth" society.

It is known that in talks with Germany Russia, in the person of its president, pledged to restore the German republic on the Volga and assist the revival of its language and culture. However, during his trip to the Volga the president stated that this will not happen until the German population totals 90 percent. And that there can be talk not of a republic or an autonomous oblast but of a rayon, moreover a rayon on the site of a former testing ground, which Commander in Chief Shaposhnikov will allocate.

Our meeting's resolution records the following:

"To deem intolerable the insulting and contemptuous tone of President Yeltsin's comment in Saratov concerning the restoration of a republic in the Volga region, and also to note that it contradicts the Russian Federation Law of 26 April 1991 'On the Rehabilitation of Repressed Peoples.'" It was further added in a wire to the Russian Supreme Soviet and to other authorities that this statement arouses the German population's indignation and that the promises to allocate the land of the former testing ground in Volgograd cannot be considered anything but an insult to the entire people, because any of the oblast's inhabitants knows what a testing ground is.

A. Vize, chairman of the oblast "Wiedergeburt" ("Rebirth") society

Accord With Russia To Overcome Tatar 'Crisis'

LD1803110992 Moscow TASS in English 0905 GMT 18 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Sorokin]

[Text] Kazan March 18 TASS—In order to overcome the crisis quickly, it is necessary to sign direct economic agreements, Tatar Prime Minister Muhammad Sabirov believes. He told journalists today that the agreement, signed by the Russian and Tatar governments, was of special importance.

We pledged to keep the volume of reciprocal deliveries in 1992 at the level not lower than in 1991, he continued. There will be no customs houses on the boundaries between the republics. It was decided to implement joint programmes in the sphere of science, technology, conversion, ecology, education, public health and culture. The sides agreed to pursue a coordinated policy in the sphere of social guarantees and employment. Consequently, Tatarstan will be a reliable partner of Russia, Sabirov said in conclusion.

Sobchak's 'Mistakes,' Disputed Decisions Eyed

PM1603152692 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian 12 Mar 92 p 1

[Unattributed feature: "The View From PRAVDA Street"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] The St. Petersburg (Leningrad) Prosecutor's Office has protested 50 decisions by the city's mayor, Doctor of Legal Sciences Anatoliy Sobchak, reports journalist Besik Pipiya.

Where, then, did Anatoliy Aleksandrovich go wrong? For example, the mayor has placed all the courts of the city on the Neva, boards of arbitration, and the legal profession under his own jurisdiction. He has introduced restrictions on the export of products from St. Petersburg, although the decree of the Russian President authorizes free trade throughout the republic. He sometimes arbitrarily creates additional bodies and increases the list of documents for the registration of commercial enterprises....

It is well known that only he who does nothing makes no mistakes. But there are too many mistakes here. [passage omitted]

The wristwatch of the ex-president of the former USSR got lost during his cordial meeting with the inhabitants of the German city of Guetersloh.

Who would have thought that this story would have, according to ITAR-TASS, "a pretty big impact in Germany, and not just there."

You would think it a commonplace event. And let us hope that the FRG police do find the missing object. But is that the real point? For all the respect for a figure of such stature, it is difficult not to see a pretty somber symbol in what happened—to be left without a watch is bad enough, but to be altogether outside of your time or to lag desperately behind it is far more lamentable. Does Mikhail Gorbachev realize that the era of overly flexible politicians who alter their convictions with unusual ease is already on the way out? At least in Russia.

We would, however, wish that Gorbachev's next trip to the United States, scheduled for 1-15 May, will pass off without anything going astray.

Businessmen Oppose Mayor's 'Antimarket' Moves

LD1303115192 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1500 GMT 12 Mar 92

[Text] St. Petersburg Mayor Anatoliy Sobchak is implementing a policy of gradual disengagement from economic cooperation with the republics of the former USSR. He has now issued two instructions. The first introduces strict licensing of deliveries from St. Petersburg enterprises to CIS countries throughout 1992 to ensure that supplies to enterprises in northwest Russia are given priority. The second directive introduces strict customs inspection to prevent illegal deliveries to Baltic countries. Leningrad Oblast has been invited to participate.

Local businessmen oppose these measures as being anti-market and contrary to Russian Government policy of creating an open economic space.

City Chairman Says Economy 'Uncontrollable'

MK1403135592 St. Petersburg Teleradiokompaniya Peterburg Television Network in Russian 1720 GMT 13 Mar 92

[L. Zibareva video report; from the "Telestantsiya Fakt" newscast]

[Text] The economic reform that is now being implemented by the Russian Government was not properly prepared and as early as January the situation in the republic became uncontrollable. These remarks were made at a meeting with Kirovskiy Rayon voters at 17 Baltiyskaya Street last night by Aleksandr Nikolayevich Belyayev, chairman of the city soviet. In his opinion, the leadership of Russia's national economy is not ready to act under the new conditions. For example, sales of output at our city's industrial enterprises have almost halved. [video shows meeting being addressed by Belyayev, portrait of Gorbachev on wall of auditorium]

Answering numerous questions from the audience, Aleksandr Nikolayevich Belyayev noted that, in parallel with the upcoming freeing of prices on energy sources, value-added tax on essentials will be decreased by up to 15 percent in St. Petersburg and it is planned to raise the level of minimum pensions in April to 542 rubles.

The cost of cooperative apartments, speculation, traffic safety, the price of bread, and many other problems were raised at the meeting. Here is what the city soviet chairman said in response to the question: When will our city be cleaned up after all?

[Begin Belyayev recording] Sanctions in the form of fines for violating relevant rules have already been worked out and they are fairly high and stiff. For example, 10 times the minimum wage, or about 3,500 rubles. This is significant, these are hefty fines, and we will introduce them as soon as we pass the legislation. New trade regulations will also be introduced which also envisage fines, and this is primarily a function of the soviet. As far as the trade going on around subway stations is concerned, according to a presidential decree, trade of this sort is not permitted in the subway and on territories around it. [end recording]

Mortgage Bank Founded in St. Petersburg

OW1803043392 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1903 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] One of the first mortgage banks in Russia has been created in St. Petersburg. It was founded as a open joint-stock company by the Sankt Petersburg Bank (which contributed 30% of the founding capital), the Saint Petersburg property fund (30% of the founding capital), and the Russian Builders Industrial Association (26%). The new bank's 15 mn [million—currency not stipulated] authorized capital is expected to increase to 100 mn in the coming year.

The minimum interest rate on mortgages on land and real estate is now set at 25-26%.

Bank President Aleksandr Vorobev announced that the bank would be able to service approximately 50 major clients in its first year of operation. The bank will not offer teller services and intends to invest mainly in the constuction of housing, including housing for farmers.

Until now legislation on land ownership has rendered mortgage banks unnecessary in Russia. It is thought that the current limitations on the sale of land could be abolished by April.

Committee To Protect Draftees' Rights Formed

PM1703163392 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 13 Mar 92 p 3

[Colonel V. Streltsov report under "Direct Line" rubric: "Number of Defenders of Draftees Is Growing. Aim Is Excellent Service"]

[Text] St. Petersburg—A "Committee for the Protection of Draftees' Rights" has been formed on the eve of the spring draft. The Democratic Party of Russia [DPR], the Christian Democratic Union, and a number of other parties are the initiators.

The committee advocates the speediest adoption by the Russian parliament of laws "On the Status of Serviceman," "On Defense," and "On Alternative Service," and other legislative acts capable of protecting the rights of the "armed man" and enabling him to feel that even while performing his service he is a member of society with equal rights. The new social organization is headed by Ivan Fedorov, DPR city committee coordinator for youth issues.

"We started cooperating with the committee even while it was being formed," said Major Stepan Zholovan, the city military commissar's aide for work with personnel. "This cooperation is taking place purely on a business level, because we do not share the political views of many of the members. But we believe it would be wrong to ignore the voluntary assistance coming from this social organization in resolving problems that draftees encounter. Incidentally, the number of such social organizations with which we are coordinating today on issues of work with the draft has expanded immeasurably. They include school-age youth associations and religious groups. Wherever we find points of common interest, we will undoubtedly work together."

International Affairs

President Decrees Moldovan Border Buffer Zone

LD1703172992 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1646 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Kiev, 17 Mar—(UKRINFORM ITAR-TASS)—The decree by Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk "On Measures To Protect the State Border of Ukraine With the Republic of Moldova," which is published today, orders in particular that no penetration into the territory of Ukraine should be permitted by armed groups and other violators of the state and customs border.

A 50-km zone under a special regime is being established temporarily along the state border with the Republic of Moldova. Group trips by citizens of Ukraine and other states across the territory of Ukraine into the Republic of Moldova also are being halted temporarily, as is the use of means of transportation for these purposes.

Foreign Ministry Issues Statement

LD1703150192 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1420 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From the "Panorama" program]

[Text] The Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs today released a statement on events in Moldova. The statement notes that events are taking place on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, particularly in the Dnestr region next to the Ukrainian border, the nature and dynamics of which are causing serious concern in Ukraine.

The republic's Ministry of Foreign Affairs is empowered to state that there has to be a proper reaction to the events taking place in Moldova because they have resulted in a violation by military formations of the state border of Ukraine, endangering its sovereignty and threatening to involve certain border rayons in the conflict. Ukraine reserves the right to take appropriate measures to safeguard its national security. The republic calls on the sides in the conflict to find an immediate political settlement to all matters of dispute, to halt the bloodshed, and to stabilize the situation.

As is known, Ukrainian President Kravchuk stated at his news conference that Ukraine is ready to propose a mechanism for political settlements of the armed conflicts in Moldova and the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast [as heard] at the meeting of CIS heads on 20 March.

Statement Issued at UN

LD1703221992 Moscow TASS in English 2115 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Maslov]

[Text] United Nations March 17 TASS—Ukraine preserves the right to take necessary measures in order to provide for its national security in connection with the current developments in neighbouring Moldova, says a statement of the Ukrainian foreign minister circulated at the U.N. headquarters on Tuesday [17 March].

The character and dynamics of developments on Moldovan territory, in particular, in the Dnestr region, neighbouring the state Ukrainian border, provoke serious concern, notes the statement.

The developments are increasingly acquiring a menacing color and, even more dangerous, threaten to exceed the republican borders. There is a danger for the Ukrainian sovereignty as an independent state and a threat of the involvement of some Ukrainian border areas in the conflict situation.

The first refugees from the Dnestr region have come to the Odessa region of Ukraine. According to them, there is a real war going on in the area of Dubossary, resulting in killed and wounded.

The aggravation of the conflict provokes suffering of the population, including foreign citizens. Making use of the absence of protection of the state Ukrainian-Moldovan border, the conflicting sides sometimes raid between Moldovan towns using direct transport routes on Ukrainian territory and ignoring legitimate demands of representatives of law enforcement bodies.

Such actions, no matter who take them, are a gross violation of the U.N. charter and principles of the Helsinki Final Act as regards the inviolability of borders and territorial integrity of states, says the document.

Strictly abiding by these and other fundamental principles of the international law, Ukraine has the right to count on a similar stand on the part of Moldova.

Proceeding from the fact that the state border was violated without the knowledge and participation of the Moldovan official authorities, Ukraine warns all the participants in the conflict in the Dnestr region on inadmissibility of using Ukrainian territory in their purposes.

Ukraine calls on the sides of the conflict to immediately settle all disputable issues in order to stop the bloodshed, stabilize the situation, remove the reasons for the conflict and consolidate the atmosphere of trust and mutual understanding.

Principles of the U.N. Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and documents coordinated within the CIS framework should be laid as a basis for the peaceful settlement, stresses the statement.

Noting a possibility to use good offices of the CSCE authoritative mechanisms by the conflicting sides, Ukraine expressed readiness to serve as a mediator in the settlement of the conflict in Moldova.

National Guard Supports Border Guards

LD1803115292 Kiev Radio Kiev in English 0100 GMT 18 Mar 92

[Text] As has been reported by the Deputy Commander of the National Guard of Ukraine, Major General Volodymyr (Nahov) in compliance with the presidential decree, the National Guard units have been ordered to render support to the border guards and to the bodies of the interior in ensuring inviolability of the state borders of Ukraine, maintaining public law and order in the districts adjacent to the borders with the republic of Moldova. Such an assistance will be rendered in case the armed formations try to violate the borders of Ukraine.

Diplomat on Karabakh, Transdnestr Conflicts

OW1803131592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1153 GMT 18 Mar 92

[From "Diplomatic Panorama" based on repsorts by diplomatic correspondent I. Porshnev and others; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Ukraine's Foreign Ministry proceeds from the assumption that the Karabakh problem will be reviewed at the CIS summit to be held in Kiev on Friday [20 March], said one of its prominent members. At the meeting in Kiev it's necessary to avoid "another exchange of accusations", he said. "The foremost task of the upcoming summit is to seek to find a mutually acceptable solution to the Karabakh conflict. For its part Ukraine is willing to do all it can to make the dialogue between the conflicting sides productive", the diplomat pointed out.

According to the diplomat, Ukraine's mediation in the efforts to settle the conflict in Transdnestr will be possible only if Kiev is requested by the two conflicting sides accordingly. "Mediatory endeavours will be pointless unless both sides display goodwill and desire to reach a settlement", he said.

According to the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry official, so far Moldova and Transdnestr have made no official response to Kiev's offer to mediate. Nevertheless members of Ukraine's Foreign Ministry "are working on proposals that might be asked for any time". The diplomat thought it premature to concretize them.

Fokin Meets Press on USSR Debt Agreement

LD1703224392 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Report by correspondent Lyudmila Mavrina on a news conference by Ukrainian Prime Minister Vitold Fokin with domestic and international correspondents on Ukraine's decision to help pay the former USSR's foreign debt in Kiev on 17 March]

[Text] The prime minister stressed that the change in position was possible as a result of substantial innovations in the system for servicing this debt, which were proposed by Ukraine in particular. Vitold Fokin views this fact as a sure victory for Ukraine rather than as a defeat. The prime minister noted that a multitude of complexities arose after Ukraine refused to sign a memorandum on paying off the former Union's debt in October 1991. Credits allocated by many governments were frozen at a time when external aid was so essential for the republics. It was possible to reach agreement with the Russian Government after the Ukrainian Government consulted leading foreign specialists. Thus, Russia and Ukraine are becoming cochairmen in the interstate council. Vitold Fokin noted that several important points on which Ukraine insisted were considered; thus, a Vneshekonombank subdivision is being organized which will be absolutely independent of any Commonwealth country and which will focus solely on servicing the foreign debt. The prime minister also noted that an agreement has been reached which makes it possible for Commonwealth states to determine independently what credits are beneficial for them, since all new treaties will be adopted bilaterally. However, while repeatedly asserting that this agreement is not a retreat from Ukraine's initial position, the prime minister acted somewhat against his conscience and forgot to mention that the countries of the Seven appreciably squeezed Ukraine's cabinet of ministers into looking for compromises with Russia. Russia also had to soften her position.

Spokesman Says Ukraine Will Not Leave CIS

LD1703140492 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1200 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] According to the STUDINFORM agency, there will be no statement on 20 March from Ukraine about leaving the CIS. The agency's correspondent was told this by (Georgiy Kassis), deputy head of the Ukraine Council of Ministers' press center. He said the republic's leadership is satisfied with the outcome of the Moscow meeting on 13 March.

I would add that the meeting reached an understanding on Ukraine paying its share of the USSR's debts.

International Bank Ready To Give Aid

LD1703220692 Moscow TASS in English 2133 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By UKRINFORM-TASS correspondents Anatoliy Grigoryev and Aleksey Trotsenko]

[Text] Kiev March 17 TASS—"We want Ukraine to become a member of our bank and render it every support," Wilfred Talviz, vice-president of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), who is on a visit in Kiev, said today. He was received by Ukrainian president, Leonid Kravchuk, later in the day.

Kravchuk expressed profound satisfaction with the willingness of the international bank to give Ukraine necessary aid to ensure its soonest socio-economic development. At the same time the Ukrainian president noted that the bank is confronted with a non-standard situation in its business relations with the republics of the former Soviet Union as distinct from such states as Hungary or Poland. "We were part of a big monster," Kravchuk explained. "Now we have come away from it and need to introduce our own currency and financial-monetary system, as well as change over to international division of labour."

Later Talviz met with Ukrainian Prime-Minister, Vitold Fokin, who acquainted the guest with the course of the economic reform. The head of the Ukrainian government stressed that Ukraine is interested in investment and credits of Western states and seeks to become a full-fledged member of international financial structures.

Diplomatic Ties Protocol Signed With Libya

LD1703192292 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1717 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By UKRINFORM correspondent Aleksey Trotsenko]

[Text] Kiev, 17 Mar (TASS)—Ukrainian Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko and Muhammad al-Madani al-Bukhari, treasury secretary (minister) of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, today signed a protocol on establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Libya is the 58th state with which Ukraine has established diplomatic relations.

Italian Ambassador Surdo Presents Credentials

OW1803054492 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1602 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Italian plenipotentiary ambassador to Ukraine Vittorio Surdo presented his credentials to the Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk in Kiev Monday [16 March].

Vittorio Surdo was born in 1943 in the Libyan capital of Tripoli. He has served as a diplomat in Egypt, France, Iran and Germany.

Until recently he has worked as deputy head of the Italian Foreign Ministry's press and information service.

Many River Ports Opened to Foreign Vessels

LD1803033192 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] The Ukrainian prime minister's press service reported that the republican Cabinet of Ministers adopted a decision on the opening of many river ports to foreign vessels.

National Affairs

Supreme Soviet Adopts Land Code 13 Mar

LD1403144392 Kiev Radio Kiev in English 2200 GMT 13 Mar 92

[Text] One of the fundamental laws which is to make a turning point in the economy of our state is transition to a market-based economy, was adopted at the session of the Supreme Soviet today. Finally the deputies adopted the land code of Ukraine. Deputy (Volodymyr Yavariskiy) said that he believes the day was a joyful one for them. The deputies have spoken through March already. Functionaries will for another two weeks be studying this law. It can be said that we have lost a spring—that is, people will only receive land for next year. There was an internal opposition when this was not mentioned (?but) it was intended to preserve collective farms (?on a volume) basis and with the same area of land in order to give less land to farmers and private land owners. This was the main (?collision) of this drama. But the fact that the land code has finally cracked out the socialist system is normal. Today we are making a turning point to a civilized form of farming. Surely the introduction of the land code is to become a decisive step in taking the agrarian sector of Ukraine's economy out of the crisis. The deputies also introduced changes and amendments to several legislative acts of Ukraine on farming economy. Examined in the first reading was the law on the rent of property to state enterprises and organizations. The Parliamentarians adopted a resolution on putting into effect a law on foreign investment. Discussed in the second reading was a draft law on the national security service. Over 200 proposals and amendments were forwarded by the people's deputies to this draft law after the first reading. But finally it was handed back to the corresponding commission for updating. The Supreme Soviet will resume its work on 25 March and begin with a closed sitting. The National Bank of Ukraine will be reporting to the deputies.

Currency Problems Aggravate Economic Situation

PM1703124992 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 16 Mar 92 First Edition p 3

[Correspondent Boris Sverdlov report under the "Nearby Foreign Parts" rubric: "Ruble Getting More Expensive Thanks to Coupon"]

[Text] There is nostalgia for the ruble in Ukraine. Whereas two months ago enterprising people would be offering to exchange 100 rubles [R] for 50 coupons in any dark alley, today they are getting rid of 100 coupons for R2-3. "Kosmos" cigarettes can be obtained for R10. If you have not got it, then hand over 25 coupons. Food stores which, in accordance with a government resolution, are obliged to sell produce for coupons alone, are trading for rubles with all their might. But as purchasers have begun to regard the "monopoly" rubles with greater respect, they naturally have begun to hide them away for a rainy day. Kiosks of the Main Administration for the Distribution of Publications, bookstores, hairdressers, and so on were immediately left high and dry. Even railroad officials switched to using two currencies. In the saving banks the lines politely let through people who are making ruble deposits. They find their way into the pocket of the person who is first in line in an instant.

President Kravchuk once said in an interview that it was the acute shortage of rubles in circulation which forced the republic to resort to a new currency. True. But only partly. The government pursued first and foremost two main aims: To protect their internal market from encroachment from outside and to strengthen the independence which they had declared by using new bank notes. But real life often serves up what the leaders would not want. At least there is no more on show. The universal stores are still completely empty. You involuntarily recall the leaflets on the eve of the all-Ukrainian referendum: On acquiring independence the magical table of plenty [skatert-samobranka] will appear before everyone. Oh, dear! From where?

People in the Donbass blame the government for raising the miners' wages to 15,000-16,000 [currency not specified] a month when the first demand was made. And people say that they have gone through the stores like a plundering horde. The majority, however, criticize the government for evicting the ruble from the republic's territory in an thoughtless and premature manner.

"You just tell me how I can manage without rubles," I heard one metal worker from Mariupol say indignantly. "Two of my sons are studying in Russia; you cannot supplement their allowances with coupons. And you cannot send my old mother in Bataysk a money transfer."

Is there any problem? Yes, and what a problem! They are not even permitted to send their beloved Ukrainian lard in parcels due to restrictions.

The markets have also become barer. Especially in the industrial eastern Ukrainian regions. Whereas approximately a year ago peasants from Rostov Oblast and from Stavropol and Krasnodar krays brought surplus produce from their plots here, now the way is barred to them. First, the customs houses, and second the introduction of coupons have become a barrier.

The former abundance of citrus and other fruits brought in from the Central Asian and Transcaucasian republics has gone. On the other hand Ukrainian merchants are prepared at any moment to export goods to Russia and break their fast on a meal of rubles. Here they are trying to cross that "transparent" border by fair means and foul.

Having withdrawn into its shell, Ukraine has come up against a problem which is atypical for it—that of feeding its own people. The myth has been exploded about how in the not too distant past all the juice was, as they said, being sucked from the republic. At the present stage an exchange of goods is coming to its aid, which was agreed at intergovernmental level in the CIS. And until the newly fledged currency becomes convertible, if only in relation to the ruble, Uzbekistan is hardly likely to begin to sell cotton, and Russia oil, gas, and timber, for coupons in the near future for example. Incidentally today, on the eve of the sowing campaign, there is absolutely no fuel and lubricants.

One last piece of information: In connection with the deficit of money in circulation and with the aim of eliminating the debt for January, February, and the first half of March, the national bank is permitting the payment of wages in coupons alone.

Now the "monopoly" rubles will no doubt become worth their weight in gold.

Crimean Tatars To Picket Parliament Building

LD1703130792 Kiev Radio Kiev First Program Network in Ukrainian 1600 GMT 16 Mar 92

[Text] [Announcer] Crimean Tatars are expected to picket the building housing the Ukraine Supreme Soviet tomorrow. (Rezo Abdulayev), member of the Central Council of the Crimean Tatars' national movement and representative of the organization in Kiev, and (Volodymyr Kuzev), head of the Secretariat of the Kiev regional organization of the Ukrainian Republican Party, came today to the editorial office to explain the reasons for that measure. I give the floor to you, Rezo, first.

[Abdulayev, in Russian] We have repeatedly appealed to the Ukraine Supreme Soviet and president to resolve the problems of the Crimean Tatar people. Nevertheless, our demands, just demands, are ignored both in localities and by the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine and the leadership of Ukraine. In this connection, we organized small-scale picketing at the beginning of October which resulted in representatives of the [word indistinct] being received by Leonid Makarovich Kravchuk, who then promised to set up a parliamentary commission which was to present him with corresponding materials after working in the Crimea. However, no such commission was set up. Seeing that our problems are not being solved, the organization of the Crimean Tatars' national movement, the Central Council of the organization, decided on many days' picketing of the Supreme Soviet on 17 March.

[Announcer] Many days' picketing is still a difficult process, let's say, as it is not February now, neither fall nor spring. It is really cold at night. Volodymyr, you as the head of the Secretariat of the Kiev regional organization of the Ukrainian Republican Party, I know, supported this picketing.

[Kuzev] We believe that all the demands of the Crimean Tatars are just and as we are for self-determination and the nation's right to self-determination we believed it right to support them and are calling on all Kiev residents to do the same.

[Announcer] I know that nearly 1,000 Crimean Tartars are still to come to Kiev.

[Abdulayev, in Russian] We are planning that approximately up to 1,000 Crimean Tartars will be picketing the building of the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine starting from 17 March.

[Announcer] You hope that your problem will after all be heard and solved, don't you?

[Abdulayev, in Russian] Yes, we are hoping that Leonid Makarovich and the Supreme Soviet will finally heed our just and lawful demands and will take a corresponding decision. We want the Supreme Soviet to decide on the issues of our return and restoring our statehood.

Leader Explains Protest Action

AU1703130392 Kiev Radio Kiev International Service in Ukrainian 1500 GMT 16 Mar 92

[Interview with Refat Chubarov, deputy chairman of the Crimean Tatar Majlis, by Dmytro Kolyk; recorded, place and date not given; Chubarov's answers are in Russian with superimposed Ukrainian translation]

[Text] [Announcer] Recently, the Majlis, the supreme organ of the Crimean Tatars, declared its intention to hold a protest action on 17 March near the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet building in Kiev. Our correspondent Dmytro Kolyk met with a representative of Crimean Tatars and asked him about the objectives of this action.

[Kolyk] Refat Chubarov, deputy chairman of the Majlis of the Tatar people [words indistinct].

[Chubarov] Crimean Tatars, as the people who have been subjected to national humiliation for hundreds of years, since our statehood was destroyed by Russia in 1783, have always understood those peoples who strive to independently decide their fates. Take, for example, the Referendum of 1 December 1991. Even though many analysts had predicted that the Crimea would be the only region that would come out against Ukrainian state independence, all of us taken together have received 54 percent [of votes] and have supported the declaration owing to the fact that nearly all Crimean Tatars that were in the Crimea at that time voted in favor of the Declaration of Ukrainian independence. However, our attitude toward the parliament of Ukraine is different, because we differentiate between the interests of the Ukrainian people and the interests of today's composition of the Supreme Soviet. We believe that those problems that are now associated with the Crimea as a territory and with the Crimean Tatars are becoming increasingly acute precisely because the Ukrainian parliament ignores the problem of Crimean Tatars.

[Kolyk] Mr. Chubarov, in your opinion, in what direction should Ukraine pursue its policy in the Crimea?

[Chubarov] I believe that Ukraine is simply obliged to become a guarantor of the renewal of the state of Crimean Tatars. This is because the Ukrainian people have proclaimed that they would build a democratic and independent state. However, if the rights of the Crimean Tatars are ignored, then, as we understand it, there cannot be any talk of a democratic Ukraine, and this is, first and foremost, dangerous for the Ukrainian people themselves.

[Kolyk] How do you see the first steps in the renewal of the Crimean Tatar state? Perhaps, this process will be a gradual one?

[Chubarov] Let us recall that our state was liquidated by force in 1945, that is to say, it was not decided through a referendum. That is why we are now categorically against allowing the status of the Crimea to be decided upon through the voting of those present residents of the peninsula who have settled on its land since we were deported, those who live in our houses and use our land. We want this to be decided with the help of other mechanisms. The adoption by the parliament of Ukraine of a political decision may become one of them. This decision must recognize the right of our people to self-determination on the given territory. Besides, jointly with the Majlis of the Crimean Tatars and with the administration of the Crimea, mechanisms of power must be elaborated that would guarantee the rights of the Crimean Tatars to maintain and develop their identity and would ensure equal rights of all residents of the Crimea, irrespective of their nationality.

[Kolyk] Mr. Chubarov, the Majlis of the Crimean Tatars has declared that a protest action will be conducted near the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet.

[Chubarov] In my opinion, the parliament of Ukraine, while adopting one decision or another, does not always proceed from adhering to the international law, but, unfortunately, often proceeds from other criteria. As concerns the Crimea, bargaining with the administration of the Crimea is under way: You remain within Ukraine and we, for our part, will shut our eyes to the Tatars' problem. I am saying this because, at present, the parliament of Ukraine resolves some problems from the point of view of who is more dangerous and who is stronger. That is why now, while the Crimean Tatars problem is neglected, the Russian problem is being moved to the forefront. Perhaps, in the opinion of some politicians, in particular, President Kravchuk, the Russian problem is today more dangerous, and, therefore, they give more attention to it. Well, by this action, we want to show that problems cannot be resolved from such positions. Since we believe that international norms provide guarantees for the renewal of our statehood, we are starting with the protest action. Moreover, if our rights are neglected, we will proclaim that our people are struggling for their national liberation and will proceed from this status in our actions. Now, donations are being collected throughout the Crimea, and a package of demands to be submitted to the parliament of Ukraine is being elaborated. We plan to complete this preparatory work by 15 March. On 17 and 18 March, an encampment will be built in the square in front of the Supreme Soviet. This encampment will remain there until the parliament resolves our problems. We expect support from public opinion and from democratic organizations of Ukraine.

[Announcer] As we can see, the Crimean problem is becoming more complicated. In fact, it comprises several problems that are, undoubtedly, interrelated. This is the question of the renewal of the statehood of Crimean Tatars. While resolving it, it is necessary to keep in mind the problem of the interethnic relations on the peninsula. Quite closely interwoven with these aspects of the Crimean problem, are interrelations between Ukraine and Russia. It is no secret that certain political circles in the neighboring state advance territorial claims upon this part of Ukraine.

No less acute is the problem of subordination of the Black Sea Fleet. The uncertainty of its status adds up a threatening shade to the political confrontation.

It is possible that some of these problems will be dropped when the parliamentary commission chaired by Volodymyr Hrynyov, deputy chairman of the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, completes its work. Jointly with representatives of the Supreme Soviet of Crimea, it must divide the functions between the republic's and Crimean organs of administration, but, in view of the fact that representatives of Crimean Tatars have not been invited to take part in this process, it is difficult to expect that this complex of Crimean problems will be finally resolved. There remains a threat to the territorial integrity of the independent Ukrainian state.

The interview with Refat Chubarov, deputy chairman of the Crimean Tatars Majlis, was conducted by Dmytro Kolyk, correspondent of the International Service of Ukrainian Radio.

Transdnestr Ukrainians Appeal to Kravchuk

LD1703205792 Kiev Radio Kiev International Service in English 0100 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] The delegates to the conference of the Ukraine culture society in Kamenka district, Transdnestr area, have appealed to the Supreme Soviet and the president of Ukraine, Leonid Kravchuk, to prevent the spread of a civil war in Pridnestrovye, where 250,000 Ukrainians live now.

In their struggle for their own selfish goals political leaders forget about people's interests. They are ready to fan up confrontation in Transdnestr according to the Karabakh scenario. The Ukrainians in Transdnestr do not consider themselves to be part of the Ukrainian diaspora because they live on native Ukrainian land alienated from Ukraine upon the order of Stalin back in 1924, indicate the authors of the appeal.

Odessa Committee Creates Refugee Commission

LD1803001592 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] A flood of Transdnestr refugees has swept into southern Ukraine. Considering the very complicated political situation in the Moldovan regions bordering Ukraine, the Odessa oblast executive committee has created a temporary commission for receiving Transdnestr refugees.

'Unity Society' Registered in Sevastopol

LD1703210892 Kiev Radio Kiev International Service in English 0100 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Society Yednist, that is Unity in English, has been registered in Sevastopol, the Crimea. It was founded by the former members of the Soviet Communist Party and their supporters, who decided to work for the Crimea's autonomy within the composition of the USSR.

Military School Cadets Appeal to Shaposhnikov

LD1703223192 Moscow TASS in English 1224 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Ostanin]

[Text] Moscow March 17 (TASS)—"Further education in the institute is becoming without any prospects and unbearable" Lvov Military Institute of Culture students, who did not take an oath of allegiance to Ukraine, said. The cadets expressed concern about their future in an appeal sent to the commander-in-chief of the CIS Armed Forces, Air Marshal Yevgeniy Shaposhnikov.

"Since September 1991 the purposeful process of destruction of the academic process and artificial supersharging [as received] of psychological tension is continuing", the appeal underscored. "Money for subscription to solely Ukrainian language newspapers is being extracted through official orders, nationalistic songs are being taught and Ukrainian traditions are being imposed", it said.

The Lvov Military Institute of Culture was a part of the integrated system of higher educational institutes under the Miistry of defence of the former Soviet Union until the formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States towards the end of 1991.

The cadets have requested Marshal Shaposhnikov to provide them an opportunity to continue their studies in specialised "military journalism" course in the Moscow Military Academy of Humanities, and also to solve the question of the status of cadets, who are at present living in Ukraine without taking an oath of allegiance to the republic.

Official Explains Changes in Postal Services

AU1803084692 Kiev URYADOVYY KURYER in Ukrainian No 10 (56), Mar 92 p 5

[L.S. Klymenko, chief of the Main Administration for Postal Communication and Distribution of the Press, answers readers' questions; compiled by V. Vorokos: "Postal Affairs"]

[Text] **Speaking about the shock caused by the price liberalization, we have particularly felt it when we learned about the new tariffs for postal services. Our readers have reacted to them by letters in which they raised quite a number of questions dealing with the activity of the communications service. We have selected the most topical of these questions and forwarded them to Ukraine's State Committee for Communications. L.S. Klymenko, chief of the Main Administration for Postal Communication and Distribution of the Press answers our readers' questions.**

[V. Kostyuk, Kiev] How were the new prices created, and what method was used in this process?

[Klymenko] In the conditions of market relations and price liberalization, in which prices and tariffs in some branches of the national economy have grown by a factor of eight to 10 or even 20 (power engineering, transport, equipment, and so on), the communications branch had to somehow react to this to ensure its functioning and social protection of its workers. There was only one way out: It was necessary to raise, by a factor of 5.8, compared with 1991, the tariffs for services, including those provided by postal communication.

Unfortunately, our branch, had it worked in accordance with the state fixed tariffs, could not have provided services that reflected the prime cost of the services.

[S. Andriychuk, town of Kamyanets-Podilskyy, Khmelnitsk Oblast] My impression is that the communications services were not ready to adapt to new conditions; the post offices do not have enough stamps, envelopes, postcards, and so. Why has this happened?

[Klymenko] The reason is that Ukraine has no printing industry of its own, an industry that would manufacture these products. We ordered stamps, envelopes, and postcards, practically all postal products, from the publishing trade center "Marka" of the USSR Ministry of Communications. It is now a former ministry. Today, after its liquidation, the publishing trade center, like much of the property of the former Union, has been transferred to the jurisdiction of Russia, and it has temporarily stopped issuing stamps for other states.

One can argue about the legitimacy of this act; however, this is the fact. Ukraine is in bad need of a printing base of its own, a base where postal items would be printed.

[I. Zakharchenko, village of Bobrykove, Luhansk Oblast] When will independent Ukraine start issuing its own envelopes, stamps, and postcards with national symbols? What measures are being taken to cover the shortages of postal payment?

[Klymenko] Last November, we signed an agreement with Russia's Goznak [State Bank Note Factory] to the effect that the first Ukrainian stamps have already been printed and will be available on 1 March 1992. Presently, Goznak is printing another eight designs of stamps for us—these will be standard postal stamps.

Ukraine's State Committee for Communications has also signed agreements with printing factories of Russia's Goznak where it placed orders for issuing postal stamps with Ukrainian themes.

[O. Sydorenko, town of Verkhnyodniprovsk, Dniepropetrovsk Oblast] What will be the regulations for sending mail to former union republics that are now sovereign states? What will be the tariffs for international trunk calls?

[Klymenko] Mail to former Union republics that are now sovereign states is now sent in accordance with previously effective rules but at new prices. The Baltic states constitute an exception. The mail is dispatched there in accordance with the procedure that applies to international mail.

Concerning tariffs for international trunk calls, they have been brought into line with the geographical situation and have been increased by a factor of five.

Moldova

CIS Armed Forces Chief Arrives in Tiraspol

LD1703131892 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] An ITAR-TASS correspondent was told at the Moldovan Interior Ministry that the Moldovan Government's deadline to the Dnestr region for handing in weapons expires at 1800 today.

Our special correspondent Sergey Pokryshkin has just sent the following report from the area of hostilities: A battle is in progress near the villages of Koshnitsa and Kochieri for control of the road linking the towns of the Dnestr region. In terms of manpower and equipment, the Moldovan armed forces are vastly superior to those fighting on the Dnestr side.

According to unconfirmed figures, five people have been killed on the Dnestr side. Losses on the Moldovan side are as yet unknown. The Moldovan weapons captured by the Dnestr side include three armored personnel carriers.

Meanwhile, Pyankov, deputy commander-in-chief of the CIS Armed Forces, has arrived in Tiraspol for talks.

Fighting Updated; Power Station Damaged

LD1703155392 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Gennadiy Varfolomeyev report from Tiraspol]

[Text] During the night of 16-17 March the dam and guardposts were subjected to periodic shelling from the right bank of the Dnestr. The shelling damaged the transformer of the Dubossary GRES [state regional electric power station], which stopped generating electricity. Three vents have been opened, and water is being discharged from the reservoir.

There was fierce fighting between 0530 and 0700 on 17 March between armed formations of the Moldovan police in the village of Kuchiyery and OPON [special purpose police units] in the village of (?Korzhu) near Dubossary. Dnestr Republic guardsmen did not take part in this fighting. There are no reports of losses from this clash.

On 16 March masked persons kidnapped General Yakovlev, former commander of the 14th Army, in (?Razdelyanskiy). His whereabouts are unknown.

People in Tiraspol and Bendery are continuing to prepare for a possible attack. Following the introduction of a special regime [osoboye polozheniye] in the Dnestr region for 17-28 March, classes have been suspended for students at general education schools, technical schools, and colleges, as have those for students at higher education colleges. Children are being evacuated from Tiraspol and Bendery to Ukraine. Registration for volunteer people's militias will begin 17 March in the Dnestr region. Volunteers are assembling at muster points, where they will be issued weapons.

Mass Mobilization Announced in Chisinau

LD1703144892 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1225 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] I would say that today the most important reports are connected with the Dnestr region. Therefore I cannot delay this report, which we received in the studio by telephone. This was a call from a correspondent from Radio-Transdnestr. Olga Kondorskaya is on the line.

[Kondorskaya] Today, 17 March, at 1800 is the deadline for the ultimatum presented by the Moldovan leadership to the leadership of the Moldovan Dnestr Republic to lay down arms. In Chisinau and other localities in Moldova mass mobilization of all men liable for call-up was announced. Special-purpose detachments fighting in villages of Koshnitsa and Kochiery, as well as in the city of Dubossary, have received reinforcement of nine armored personnel carriers from the Moldovan side. Right now a battle is going on in the village of Koshnitsa in the Dubossary region, as well as around the dam of the Dubossary hydroelectric power station. The number of casualties in not known, but there are wounded and dead on both sides. In the last hour it became known that Dnestr Republic Guardsmen captured a Romanian-made armored personnel carrier in the city of Dubossary.

More Mobilizations Reported

AU1703165692 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1542 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 17/3/1992—Sporadic fire could be heard in Transdnestria on the night of Monday [16 March] to Tuesday [17 March], while tension in the whole area remained high, the ROMPRES correspondent reports.

The general commissar of the Republic of Moldova, General Dabija, said that, according to an order by the National Defense Ministry and the Presidency, Interior Ministry troops were complemented with cadres put in reserve. On Monday, March 16, reserve cadres arrived from various districts to join Interior Ministry troops. However, the rumor that a general mobilization was on was dismissed. The commander of the Interior Ministry troops deployed in the area, Vladimir Roskov, said that in case of an attack by the separatists the technical equipment of the detachments he coordinates was precarious and the military could hardly fight an open fight.

In the wake of the ultimatum of the government of the Republic of Moldova stipulating that separatist military groupings and Cossack military lay down weapons before Tuesday, March 17, at 18:00 hours, the Defense

Committee of the self-styled Dnestr Republic took contrary measures, as was announced on Radio Tiraspol, whereby the combat-apt population is being mobilized to fight. Furthermore, to finance the separatist actions it was agreed to use funds in local banks and the Dnestr political leadership also counts on the material aid offered by the directors of the main economic units and enterprises.

On Monday, March 16, hundreds of families in the area under fight crossed the Dnester taking refuge with relatives or other people willing to take them in. Groups of men willing to fight in Transdnestria gather in Chisinau and other towns every day and they ask for weapons and ammunition.

'Heated' Atmosphere; Snegur Threatens To Resign

LD1703172192 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1512 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Report by correspondent Mikhail Sokirke "on a bad line from Chisinau, Moldova"]

[Summary From Poor Reception] "I have just returned from the parliament of the Republic of Moldova, where the events in the Dnestr region were discussed. I want to say that given the complexity of the situation in the republic and the importance of the question under discussion, it was decided to hold today's session behind closed doors. An exception was made for us, however, and I am pleased to report what went on." Several dozen women from left bank areas attended the session, and "literally with tears in their eyes told the deputies about the excesses committed by the Dnestr region guardsmen and Cossacks, and persistently and even indignantly begged for help and protection. At midday it was reported to parliament that large forces of Dnestr region guardsmen had started a mass offensive against the village of Koshnitsa, and that people have been killed and injured."

Following this, the atmosphere in parliament got very heated. Some deputies demanded decisive measures, others advocated a political solution of this dangerous conflict. Things even went so far that President Mircea Snegur and Prime Minister Valeriu Muravski declared their readiness to resign unless the parliament backed their desire to resolve the question by peaceful means. At this time, however, in anticipation of a parliamentary decision on the Dnestr region, a very large group of people gathered outside in the street demanding decisive measures to protect the inhabitants of the left bank area. Chanting, they asked for weapons to be issued to them so they could protect their fellow citizens. Parliament has not yet adopted any final decision.

"The president has proposed various options: first, a cease-fire by both sides and the creation of a free economic zone on the left bank area. Which of these options will be adopted—and others may be proposed—it is hard to say at present. One thing is quite clear: Both Mircea Snegur and Prime Minister Valeriu Muravski and many deputies are in favor of a peaceful settlement of this issue. Reports have already gone out in our news bulletins that the government of the republic has allegedly issued an ultimatum, namely that the Dnestr region guardsmen should lay down their arms by 1800 hours today. President Snegur said officially today that this was not an ultimatum, but merely an appeal from the government to the guardsmen and Cossacks of the Dnestr region to lay down their arms to avoid bloodshed. I am citing his words here."

Meanwhile, a group of military men led by General Benkov and a delegation of Russian members of parliament has arrived in Moldova. "They are at this moment discussing the situation in the Dnestr region with President Mircea Snegur of Moldova."

Snegur Makes Proposals

LD1703182392 Moscow Programma Radio Odin Network in Russian 1600 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Moldovan President Mircea Snegur made a speech today at a closed meeting of parliament. He described the events taking place in Transdnestr as being a new way of dismembering the Republic of Moldova. Having stated that neither of the confronting sides in the Dubossary conflict can resolve the problems that have emerged with the help of weapons, Snegur put forward a number of measures for a peaceful settlement to the conflict. In his opinion, at the first stage it is necessary to achieve a cease-fire, protect the civilian population from attacks by the armed guards of Transdnestr, and then to resolve the military and other issues. To help solve the problems facing Transdnestr, President Snegur mentioned the possible formation of a free economic zone in the region. He also proposed forming a commission consisting of members of parliament and of the government to draft proposals regarding definition of the status of a free economic zone of Transdnestr.

Snegur highly assessed the statements by the Ukrainian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and by the Romanian Government on the events in Transdnestr. At the same time he expressed bewilderment regarding the position of Russia, which has still not made a precise appraisal of the presence of armed formations of Russian Cossacks on Moldovan territory and their interference in Moldova's internal affairs.

Conflict 'May Escalate Into Civil War'

LD1703191592 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Six people died this morning in armed clashes near Dubossary, bringing the total number of dead over the past four days to 20 and the number of wounded to about 60. The Moldovan Internal Affairs Ministry has started mobilizing Chisinau reservists, and AFP reports that the Moldovan parliament demands that President

Mircea Snegur resign. The Dnestr Republic's leaders do not exclude the possibility that the present conflict may escalate into civil war. Ukraine has offered its mediation and has stated its readiness to receive refugees, who are already arriving on its territory. The Russian parliamentary delegation met Tiraspol authorities today and plans to meet Moldovan President Snegur in Chisinau.

Shaposhnikov Aide Urges Cessation of Hostilities

LD1703180292 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1530 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Report by correspondent Sergey Fateyev from Odessa]

[Excerpts] [Fateyev] I have just returned from Dnestr. [passage omitted] It has already been reported that a delegation of Russian parliamentaries and representatives of the command of the CIS Joint Armed Forces has travelled here urgently to resume the talks that were interrupted. Right after the talks in Dnestr I interviewed Colonel-General Boris Pyankov, Marshal Shaposhnikov's deputy.

[Begin recording] [Pyankov] First, I want to say the following: A group of Russian Supreme Soviet deputies arrived in Moldova. Yesterday they worked in Chisinau. Together we met with Moldovan Prime Minister Valeriu Muravski and with the Moldovan Supreme Soviet chairman. We will meet with Moldovan President Snegur at 1500 today. Yesterday's debate continued until about 2300. Its main goal was to stop the bloodshed on the left bank immediately, immediately [repeats] and by any means. Commands and instructions seemed to be given yesterday and some kind of hope appeared that the shooting and hostilities would be stopped. Starting this morning, reports have been arriving from every side saying that exchanges of fire have resumed and that APC's are being used. Such exchanges of fire are taking place in different places in the area north of Dubossary. Military subunits are not being used anywhere. The army is not taking part in combat operations. The Army has taken a neutral position. One must mention, though, that great pressure is being brought to bear on army subunits and military units. From every side there are demands—people are standing, even here saying: Give us weapons, military equipment and ammunition. Why does the Army not form a barrier along the Dnestr River?

I think that the following should be resolved first: to immediately stop the shooting and hostilities of any kind, immediately and by all possible means, because all this is fraught with the escalation of military clashes and unpredictable consequences. I think that if this is not done, there will be huge losses.

Incidentally, I mentioned this in my speech at the Supreme Soviet. I said that if we do not find a political solution to this problem by joint efforts, we will get a second Karabakh here.

[Fateyev] The Moldovan Government's ultimatum expires at 1800.

[Pyankov] Yes, the ultimatum expires at 1800, therefore we will be at President's Snegur at 1500 and will tell him once again that in this case an ultimatum cannot solve the problem. We will insist and demand that the hostilities should be stopped immediately. [passage omitted] [end recording]

Government, Dnestr Leaders Order Cease-Fire

LD1703183192 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] A report from ITAR-TASS has just been brought into the studio. It says that the Government of Moldova has instructed the republic's Ministry of Internal Affairs to halt combat actions in the Dnestr region and to cease fire as of 1900 local time. The response of the Dnestr leaders to this proposal from the Moldovan Government was similarly to instruct their armed formations to cease fire as of 1900 local time. How good it would be if there were more such reports.

Prime Minister Calls for End To Fighting

AU1703193092 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Report by Gabriel Ionescu from Chisinau]

[Excerpts] The Government of the Republic of Moldova ordered the Ministry of Interior to halt fire on the left bank of the Dnestr River as of today, 1900, Moldovan Prime Minister Valeriu Muravski stated tonight. Likewise, he called on the separatist leaders in Transdnestria to halt fire and give appropriate orders in this respect. We are waiting to meet and to hold talks, said Mr. Muravski.

In the declaration broadcast by Radio Chisinau in Romanian and Russian languages one hour ago, the Moldovan prime minister turned to all citizens of the republic, regardless of nationality. The events that have taken place in the past days on the left bank of the Dnestr River have proven the lack of reason for bloodshed. There have been scores of deaths, hundreds of wounded, and hundreds and thousands [as heard] of families left without homes, without parents, brothers, or children. The problems in the republic cannot be solved through bloodshed, said Mr. Muravski. The Moldovan Government believes that only through conciliation, and also by making use of the services of the Governments of Romania, Ukraine, and Russia, can solutions to the problems be found in the coming days, the prime minister added.

Esteemed listeners, at this hour the parliament of the republic is holding a meeting. A block of laws regarding the national army has been endorsed. [passage omitted]

At this hour, hundreds of demonstrators are gathered in front of the parliament waiting for the decisions of the legislative forum. Currently, the situation in the conflicting zone is extremely tense.

Chisinau Demonstrators Demand Resolutions

AU1703201392 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 1907 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES, 17/3/1992—The meeting arranged by the Chisinau inhabitants continues in front of the parliament building. The about 2,000 demonstrators insist upon meeting with the president of the Republic of Moldova.

The crowd ask for weapons to join the fight for the defense of their ancestors' land profaned by the Cossack mercenaries, MOLDOVA- PRES agency informs.

The crowd was addressed by the president of the legislative forum, Aleksxandr Moshanu, who proposed that a resolution of the parliament be awaited for.

This afternoon the traffic on the main thoroughfare in Chisinau, the Stefan cel Mare Avenue, has been interrupted. At about 14.00 hours hundreds of citizens of various ages—many of them refugees from the settlements on the left bank of the Dnestr—had blocked the deputies' exit from the Parliament Building. In categorical terms, MOLDOVA-PRES agency informs, they demanded the parliamentarians to go back to the session hall to adopt immediately a resolution on the situation in Transdnestria.

The demonstrators expressed their dissatisfaction at the actions taken by the republic's authorities to settle the situation and to stop the bloodshed. The dissatisfaction of the crowd gathered in front of the parliament headquarters was also caused by the resolution adopted at this morning's session to work with closed doors.

On March 17 hundreds of people attended a meeting in front of the "Vasile Alecsandri" theater in the town of Balti to protest against the crimes made by separatists on the left bank of the Dnestr.

The participants adopted a resolution whereby they demanded the government and the parliament of the Republic of Moldova to call up an extraordinary session with the participation of the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, Romania as well as of United Nations representatives to stop the bloodshed, the MOLDOVA-PRES correspondent informs.

CIS Troops Issue Statement on Conflict

LD1703223492 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 2004 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar [dateline as received]—The authorities of Moldova and Dnestr have agreed to halt combat activities in Dnestr and to establish a cease-fire as from 1900 local time.

The increasing amount of clashes between the Moldovan police and the National Guard of Dnestr in the last few days have brought about fatalities on both sides and among the civil population. Russian television reports that 20 people have been killed and 60 wounded there in the past four days.

The ultimatum announced by the Moldovan authorities to Dnestr expired at 1800 today. The Moldovan authorities demanded that weapons be surrendered and all armed formations of the Dnestr Republic, mostly inhabited by a Russian-speaking population, and which they do not recognize, are disbanded.

The cease-fire instruction was given by the republican government to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Moldovan Premier Valeriu Muravski said tonight in an appeal to the citizens of the republic. He called on the leaders of Dnestr to start talks on a peaceful settlement of the conflict. The Moldovan premier stated that governments of other states could contribute to this process. The embassy of Great Britain has, in particular, offered its mediation.

The leaders of Dnestr have responded to the proposals put forward by the Moldovan Government, and have also instructed their armed formations to cease firing from 1900 local time. This was revealed to an ITAR-TASS correspondent by Grigoriy Marakutsa, chairman of the Dnestr Republic Supreme Soviet. According to him, Dnestr has also agreed to draw in foreign intermediaries for talks.

Speaking today at a closed meeting of the Moldovan parliament, President Mircea Snegur said that not one of the sides in Dnestr can achieve success with the use of weapons. According to him, it is necessary, in the first instance, to achieve a cease-fire on both sides and then to grant Dnestr the status of a free economic zone. At the same time, in accordance with the president's decree, a partial mobilization of the Moldovan population into sub-units of local militia has begun. The republican parliament today supported Snegur's request to speed up the adoption of laws which will contribute to the creation of a Moldova National Army. It simultaneously approved four laws which make up the military doctrine of Moldova: "On defense," "On the armed forces," "On the military obligations of citizens of Moldova," and "On the social and legal protection of servicemen and citizens undergoing military training, and of members of their families."

The armed formations of Dnestr include the "Dnestr" battalion, consisting of 150 persons; the National Guard, consisting of about 1,000 fighters; and about 100 Cossack volunteers who have arrived from Kuban and the Don regions. This was revealed by Sergey Blagodarnyy, chairman of the Dnestr Democratic Party, who arrived in Moscow today on instructions from the republican Supreme Soviet chairman. "Thousands of well-trained and armed people stand against us. Politicians from Kishinev are threatening to reach Tiraspol. In order to achieve this a concentration of personnel and armored vehicles [bronetekhnika] is being undertaken in all the border regions adjacent to Dnestr," he said.

A conference of officers and noncommissioned officers of the CIS armed forces' 14th Army located in Moldova issued a statement which effectively signifies the possibility of the CIS armed forces violating the neutrality they have observed so far in the conflict in Dnestr. In the event of the threat of war in Dnestr becoming a reality, the Army does not intend to stand idle and will be forced to take up arms to defend itself, its families and people, the document says. The military consider that the Armed Forces' neutral position can not prevent the escalation of military operations in the Transcaucasus, so they do not intend to help the lands on the banks of the Dnester to be turned into a "Moldovan Karabakh".

Snegur Addresses Parliament on Events

AU1803104792 Bucharest ROMPRES in English 0942 GMT 18 Mar 92

[Text] Bucharest, ROMPRES 18/3/1992—Moldova's Parliament resumed, on 17 March, a closed session. The deputies heard the testimony of villagers on the left bank of the Dnestr, who eye-witnessed wrongdoings there, MOLDOVA PRES reports.

Addressing parliament, Moldovan President Mircea Snegur said neither party involved in the Transdnestrian conflict could win by way of arms. The government is drafting a plan for the settlement of the situation on the left bank of the Dnestr under which the native population will be protected, the president said. Mircea Snegur hinted that it was not easy for the Ministry of the Interior troops to keep order in Transdnestria, as an analysis of the latest developments showed. He urged the deputies more speedily to discuss the National Army Bill and a package of bills on the military doctrine of the republic. For the situation at Dubossary to be restored to normal, the president suggested an immediate cease-fire and the drafting of documents to make that territory a free economic zone as an alternative solution to the problems of Transdniestria.

President Snegur linked the events in Transdnestria to the Moscow actions of supporters of the former USSR.

Speaking of the situation on the left bank of the Dnestr, he assessed the secessionists' actions at Tiraspol as another coup aimed at the dismemberment of the republic. Mircea Snegur stated his gratitude to the Foreign Ministry of Ukraine and Romania's leadership who rightly assessed the events in Transdnestria, but said he was puzzled by the Russian leadership which kept silent, and which had not made any pronouncement on the Cossacks' armed interference in Moldova's internal affairs, or answered the many messages it had received from the leadership of Moldova.

In his address, Defence Minister Lt.-Gen. Ion Costas asked parliament to make a lucid appraisal of the situation. According to him, there are in Transdnestria professionals who have at their disposal mines, hand grenades, heavy equipment. He said the national army bill ought to be discussed quickly.

Moldova's Prime Minister Valeriu Muravschi, said the government gave the police detachments deployed in Transdnestria all the assistance it could. However, it was increasingly difficult to stave off the guardists and the Cossacks, he said, and extra forces are needed. More forces should be called up, he said, or apply to other states for help.

[Moscow TASS International Service in Russian at 0843 GMT on 18 March, in a Chisinau-datelined report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Fedor Angeli, adds the following: "Last night was calm in the conflict areas of the Dnestr Region. The mutual accord on a cease-fire from 1900, reached yesterday evening by the Moldovan authorities and the leaders of the Dnestr republic, mainly inhabited by a Russian-speaking population and which the Moldovan authorities do not recognize, has been observed. The ITAR-TASS correspondent was told this at the press offices of the interior ministries of Moldova and the Dnestr region."]

Cease-Fire Leads to Quiet Night in Dubossary

OW1803120992 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1040 GMT 18 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Dimitru Kurletianu, chief of the Moldovan Interior Ministry's press bureau, has told IF [INTERFAX] that the situation in the Dubossary District, where armed clashes have repeatedly occurred of late, was calm and quiet on Tuesday [17 March] night. Fire exchanges had stopped by Tuesday evening, and no more incidents were registered.

This is seen as a direct effect of the ceasefire agreement concluded between Chisinau and Tiraspol yesterday.

Troops, 'Separatists' Observe Cease-Fire

AU1703214592 Bucharest Radio Romania Network in Romanian 2044 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Report by Gabriel Ionescu from Chisinau]

[Text] Esteemed listeners, according to the spokesman of the Interior Ministry of the Republic of Moldova, both the troops of the Ministry of the Interior and the troops of separatists, which include guardsmen and Cossack nationals, have halted fire on the left bank of the Dnestr River. Thus, the orders of the Moldovan Government to the Ministry of Interior of the republic regarding the ceasefire starting at 1900 is being observed not only by the Moldovan police but also by separatists.

At 2115 the Moldovan parliament—after having held a meeting for almost 12 hours—announced the following decision regarding the sociopolitical situation on the left bank of the Dnestr River and other localities—I am quoting:

1. The Government of the Republic of Moldova will take all necessary measures to ameliorate the situation on the left bank of the Dnestr River, where the constitution of the republic and the interest of citizens are flagrantly violated.

2. The government will inform the public daily on the measures it is taking in order to ameliorate the situation.

3. The present decision comes into force today, 17 March.

At 2125 the prime minister of the Republic of Moldova, Mr. Valeriu Muravski, took the floor before the deputies and said that he will observe the parliament's decision. He made a brief presentation of today's events on the left bank of the Dnestr River and noted that at the moment Moldova has the situation under control in the Ribnita-Dubossary region.

At 2135 the president of the republic, Mr. Mircea Snegur, addressed the parliamentarians and informed them that he had held a telephone conversation with the president of the Russian Federation, Mr. Boris Yeltsin, during which he asked President Yeltsin to adopt a clear position as far as the Russian Cossack mercenaries on the territory of Moldova are concerned. Mr. Snegur mentioned that a meeting with representatives of the Foreign Ministry of Moldova, Ukraine, and Russia will take place in coming days.

Esteemed listeners, the situation in the conflict area remains tense. We have received news about thousands of refugees looking for shelter on the right bank of the Dnestr River. Local authorities are taking measures to ensure lodging and food for them. There are mostly women and children among them.

Government Establishes Diplomatic Ties With Cuba

*OW1703204992 Moscow INTERFAX in English
1843 GMT 17 Mar 92*

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] An agreement to establish diplomatic ties was signed by Cuba and Moldova in Chisinau Tuesday [17 March]. The document which envisages the opening of embassies in Chisinau and Havana was signed by the First Deputy Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Moldova Nikolay Asmokeska and First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Cuba Hidalgo Basulto.

The Ministers also signed a protocol on cooperation of the foreign political departments of both governments from 1992-1994.

Kazakhstan

Republic Reportedly To Begin Weapons Sales

PM1703140992 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Mar 92 First Edition p 7

[DANA-PRESS report: "What Weapons Kazakhstan Is Trading in"]

[Text] It has become known to journalists from Alma-Ata's DANA-PRESS agency at a meeting with Vladimir Misnikov, president of the "Paks-Alisa" exchange; Aleksandr Golovenko, general director of the "SOVIG Co" joint venture; and a representative of the Kazakhstan military-industrial complex, who did not give his name; that the sale of arms will begin in approximately May through the "Paks-Alisa" exchange. In particular SU-24MK variable-geometry front-line bombers (attack aircraft) probably will be presented—in military slang the aircraft is called "the butcher"—plus an as-yet secret "device" installed on an armored personnel carrier and designed to "coordinate air and ground forces." The weapon will be sold only abroad. Syria was cited among the most probable purchasers.

The commodity will be fitted out as the customer wishes. For instance, the "butcher" is an all-weather jet attack aircraft and will be capable of carrying out combat operations in pitch darkness, flying at "extremely low altitudes," and carrying out targeted fire.

The device for "coordinating air and ground forces" records conversations and also listens to tape recordings "outside the device." It is recommended for national guards.

All these weapons will be sold exclusively for currency.

Party Leader on Volunteers for Azerbaijan

PM1803114592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 14 Mar 92 Moscow Edition p 2

[Vladimir Ardayev report: "Kazakh Volunteers Ready To Go to Azerbaijan"]

[Text] Alma-Ata—The composer Kh. Kozhakhmetov, leader of the "Zheltoksan" national democratic party, which unites participants in the December 1986 events in Alma-Ata, has appealed for a "volunteer battalion" to be formed in Kazakhstan for dispatch to the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict zone.

"I first shared my idea with like-minded people at 'Zheltoksan's' routine general assembly," Kozhakhmetov explained to IZVESTIYA's correspondent. "This took place after people had been horrified at the slaughter which occurred in the Azerbaijani city of Khodzhaly. The assembly sent its condolences to Azerbaijan and resolved to announce the recruitment of volunteers. People are signing up at present."

Asked whether or not he considered such an action to be interference in the affairs of other sovereign states, Kozhakhmetov replied that the "Kazakh volunteers" are going to the Transcaucasus without arms and on the most peaceful of missions. Their main aim, he explained, is to lend the Azerbaijanis moral support and to conduct negotiations with both the Azerbaijani and Armenian national democratic formations.

The leader of the opposition party—which, incidentally, has formed its shadow cabinet—noted that as the official Russian and Kazakh peace mission has not produced any results in this war, he hopes that an action by them, which bears the imprint of people's democracy, will play its own role. At the same time he does not deny the possibility that the "volunteers" will have to interfere in the conflict—"if the circumstances require this."

In conclusion Kozhakhmetov reported that he had received a summons from the prosecutor's office, where, he believes, he is being summoned to be warned about the inadmissibility of the actions he is undertaking. He himself, however, sees nothing illegal in them.

Social Protection for Servicemen Ensured

LD1703200192 Moscow TASS in English 1457 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By Kaztag correspondent Konstantin Borodinov for ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Alma-Ata March 17 TASS—Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev issued a decree on measures to provide social protection to military men serving on the territory of the republic.

Executive bodies have been entitled to regularly provide armed forces units with supplies of food and material-technical resources, as well as consumer goods. The decree envisages considerable raise of the stuff salaries and 500 roubles payment to recruits when discharged from the services.

Another major issue, solved in the decree, is to provide accomodation to those who served in the Army for more than 20 years. They will become owners of the apartments they live in. They will have to pay 50 per cent of the rent. Servicemen who have no apartments at all will receive a compensation worth 300 roubles.

Unions Say Minimum Wage Discussion Necessary

LD1703212892 Moscow TASS in English 1449 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By KAZTAG correspondent Gennadiy Kulagin—TASS]

[Text] Alma-Ata March 17 [dateline as received]—The latest pay rise for people employed by enterprises and organisations financed from the budget was immediately consumed by price increases, says an open letter of the council of Kazakhstan's Trade Union Federation.

The council has estimated that the living wage in the republic is 1,812 roubles, while doctors and teachers, for instance, earn only 610 roubles per month. Poverty compells them to strike. Republican strike committees of workers in public education and health services have already been formed. They sent their justifiable demands to the president and the government.

Supporting them, the council of the Trade Union Federation deems it necessary to discuss at a regular session of parliament the question of minimum wages, pensions and scholarships. It believes they should not be lower than the living wage and should be indexed as prices of food, commodities and services rise.

Privatization Begins in Agro-Industrial Area

LD1703215292 Moscow TASS in English 1448 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By KAZTAG correspondent Anatoliy Shevelev—TASS]

[Text] Alma-Ata March 17—Under a decree of Kazakhstan's President Nursultan Nazarbayev "on urgent measures for the privatisation of procurement, processing and servicing enterprises of the agroindustrial complex" all agroindustrial enterprises of Kazakhstan should become privatised by March 1, 1993. Enterprises that are in the red or show little profit should become private property in the first half of the current year.

Commenting on the approach to new forms of property in agriculture, first deputy chief of the Alma-Ata regional agricultural agency Fedor Ashenbrenner emphasised the creation of joint stock companies and the forming of associations of farmer economies.

Two collective farms in the region turned into small private enterprises, but preference is given to a collective form of management offering an opportunity of long-term credits. It is believed that the creation of joint stock companies at a dairy complex, and at the Alma-Ata meat-packing complex, where half of the shares will be owned by raw material producers, will prevent monopolism of processing enterprises and will help decrease losses during goods transportation and storage.

Causes of Troop Mutiny at Baykonur Detailed

927Q0102A Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 12 Mar 92 p 2

[Article by Colonel A. Ladin, KRASNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent: "Baykonur after the Social Outburst"]

[Text] Leninsk—**KRASNAYA ZVEZDA has already written about the critical situation that has arisen in military construction units deployed at the Baykonur cosmodrome. The outbreaks of disorder and burning of barracks, staff premises, and medical centers evoked a broad response in the armed forces and worried the parents of military builders.**

It is easy to explain the general anxiety that has occurred. But how is what happened to be explained? Our correspondent reflects on this.

I flew to Baykonur already knowing about the alarming events. I could not grasp it all: People have died, and the losses are being counted in the millions.

While there I talked to many people. Various explanations were given for what happened. I also heard this: They said it was a kind of protest against the conditions of service. Fine, a protest. But it manifested itself rather strangely: Company storerooms and commodity and food warehouses of military construction detachments were ransacked. In one of them, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel V. Migalev, 200 kilograms of raw meat, 132 kilograms of cream, and 100 kilograms of vegetable oil were stolen.

Witnesses to the events that occurred noted that from the very first illegal acts there were civilians among the soldiers. During a meeting between staff officers and members of the state commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan, headed by commission chairman Yu. Khitrinnykh, and also Colonel General N. Chekov, deputy commander in chief of the Combined Armed Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States for construction and billeting of troops, speakers said that they could not believe that soldiers, sergeants, and military construction personnel, gathering spontaneously, could come up with the idea of arson and the attempt to put electric substations out of commission. After all, there was an attempt to shut off the valve of the water pipeline that supplied Leninsk, and this was generally almost accomplished. Fortunately, a misfortune was successfully avoided.

Again the question: If someone directed the actions of the servicemen, what objective did these people have? Some offer the following explanation: that this is a protest against the presence of military construction personnel at the Baykonur cosmodrome. They say that the settlements situated near the cosmodrome also know of cases of rudeness and the poor everyday conditions that exist in the collectives of the military construction personnel, and that they cannot reconcile themselves to this.

It is true that it is not possible to tolerate this. But, on the other hand, these questions were discussed without excessive passion and with concern at a meeting between Lieutenant General S. Nurmagambetov, chairman of the State Defense Committee of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and representatives of the public and elders of the Tyuratam station. The people were even ready in some way to help the command eliminate deficiencies. It is hardly likely that this would be a concern for those, for example, who set fire to the medical station or the barracks, considered to be among the best in living arrangements. Somehow it is not believable that such actions were blessed by noble intentions.

Unfortunately, there are as many reasons as you can imagine for the expression of dissatisfaction today. And not only in Leninsk, and not only in one or another military construction detachment. Lieutenant General S. Nurmagambetov told me about this when I asked him to come to Baykonur and give an assessment of what happened. Sagadat Kozhakhmetovich emphasized that many problems have been growing in severity for a long time. This was apparent. But the state system that existed before, figuratively speaking, put the missile in first place, and everything that was earmarked for people—housing construction, social facilities for soldiers and military construction personnel—and for officers' and warrant officers' families was done last with little means. Many social living condition questions were by far not decided at the level that ensured the realization of fantastic space projects.

So, I repeat, military construction personnel have more than enough reasons for an expression of dissatisfaction. But take the tardy payment of monetary wages. Who would take it in his head not to issue pay to military construction personnel when there was money in the account of Glavspetsvoyenstroy [Main Directorate of Special Military Construction]? The client, in the form of the Department of Space Systems of the CIS Combined Armed Forces, did not settle accounts with the military construction organizations of Baykonur for December of last year and for two months of this year. In the words of Major General B. Kalinichev, chief of the Engineering Directorate of this department, the debt already amounts to 612 million rubles. But how can payment be made, when the financing of space programs has been practically stopped. Colonel A. Bilichenko, the chief economist of the construction main administration, added to this: Loans amounting to 20 million rubles have already been activated at the bank to continue the work that has been started on installations at Baykonur.

It would seem that not much is being said about the fact that the cosmodrome is needed by all the republics of the former Union. It would seem that it is perfectly clear that reliable modern communications are assured because of space equipment, and that cartographers, geologists, and meteorologists use it to resolve their tasks. But questions of finance are not being resolved. Baykonur is eagerly awaiting specific agreements from the heads of state of the CIS, who are to assemble on 20 March for the next session in Kiev. At present, only Kazakhstan has allocated 50 million rubles, which is directed to support the social services of the city of Leninsk. But there were only enough resources for January and February; how to live beyond this is unknown.

The same Major General B. Kalinichev, apparently not laying it on thick at all, said that if the question of financing space programs is not resolved, Baykonur expects a real catastrophe. In his opinion, a billion rubles are needed.

The latest events in the Baykonur military construction units have suggested the idea to many managers that, since the client today is not in a condition to pay for construction work being conducted at installations, the number of military construction detachments should be reduced.

But it is hardly likely that this kind of a decision will please everyone. Major General Kalinichev thinks that this should not be done. It is not a question of erecting new installations, although there will be no one to maintain those that exist in operating condition.

The military construction personnel are also "tied" to other regional problems. They erected schools, clubs, and other social facilities on adjacent and remote sovkhozes and kolkhozes. They also drilled and readied for operation seven of 22 water wells intended to supply population centers near Baykonur. They were planning to participate in the implementation of programs to equip zones of the Aral Sea and build canned food plants and agricultural processing shops. If the military construction personnel leave, it is unlikely that these ideas will be carried out. It can be assumed that everyone who intends to live and work in Leninsk on behalf of the development of advanced directions in the space sciences is counting on improved living conditions.

It would be good, of course, if all of these problems were resolved without military construction personnel. But for the time being this is only wishful thinking. Since this is the case, however, it is time seriously to get down to providing good quality living and service conditions. But it is also impossible to forget the missilemen at the cosmodrome, who have no fewer problems. Among them there are many who have given their entire lives to the cosmodrome. Really, do these people not deserve better treatment?

Kyrgyzstan

Akayev Arrives in India, Meets With Leaders

LD1703093192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 0701 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Sergey Karmalito]

[Excerpts] Delhi, 17 Mar (TASS)—Askar Akayev, president of Kyrgyzstan, arrived in the India today on an official three-day visit.

At Rashtrapati Bkhavan, the presidential palace, the high-ranking guest was welcomed by Indian President R. Venkataraman, Prime Minister P.V. Narasimkha, Minister of State for External Affairs E. Faleiro, and other officials. A.M. Dryukov, Russian Federation ambassador to India, was also among those who met him. An artillery salute was fired in honor of the president of independent Kyrgyzstan. A. Akayev inspected the honor guard. [passage omitted]

In a statement to press representatives, the president of Kyrgyzstan noted that this is the first visit to the Republic of India by a state delegation of the republic.

"We regard it," A. Akayev said, "as a step toward establishing relations of friendship and cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and India and hope to lay the foundations for mutual action in all spheres—political, economic and humanitarian. Our ideals and our positions on domestic and foreign policy coincide in many ways with those to which India adheres. Therefore, we hope that our visit, forthcoming meetings, conversations with the president of India, the prime minister, and other state figures, and the documents which will be signed will create a good basis for fruitfull and mutually beneficial cooperation between Kyrgyzstan and India."

State Legalizes Status of German Districts

OW1803043992 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1407 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In line with the president's decree on the establishment of two German national districts, the government of Kyrgyzstan has legalized their status by adopting a special act on the German national district in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan.

The president's legal adviser Leonid Levitin told IF [INTERFAX] that now the leader of the Chu regional administration, jointly with the council of the Germans of the republic of Kyrgyzstan will give the Sokuluk and Chu German national districts practical assistance in their activity and facilitate their participation in public life. A fund for socio-economic and cultural development of the Germans of Kyrgyzstan has been established. All commercial and industrial enterprises which have been and will be established in these districts will be freed from income tax till 1994.

President Offers Financial Help to Media

LD1303111292 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 0800 GMT 13 Mar 92

[Text] The President of Kyrgyzstan, Askar Akayev, has expressed readiness to help the central newspapers of the former USSR and the main television and radio company Ostankino. We, he said, shall pay out [as heard] share of the expenses for maintaining them if the other republics support us. In his opinion, it is very important to keep and develop a single information space in the Commonwealth of Independent States. President Akayev said that the future of the mass media of the former USSR will be discussed by the leaders of the Commonwealth countries when they meet in Kiev on the 20th of this month.

Akayev Meets Socialist International Chairman

OW1003235592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 2005 GMT 10 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At a meeting with the Socialist International's Vice-President Hans-Jochen Vogel in Bishkek on Tuesday [10 March], President Askar Akayev of Kyrgyzstan said most of the political and economic reforms in his republic are based on the ideas of Western social democrats.

He said one of his major concerns is how to get workers, entrepreneurs and the state to become partners during the country's transition to market practices. According to Akayev, democracy in Kyrgyzstan will be a guaranteed success if it rests on a multi-party basis.

Vogel welcomed Kyrgyzstan's desire to get integrated into international organizations, particularly the IMF and World Bank.

Canadians To Help Develop Mining Industry

LD1303092192 Moscow TASS in English 0745 GMT 13 Mar 92

[Text] Moscow March 13 ITAR-TASS—The medium-level administrative staff in Kyrgyzstan is hampering economic and political reforms. Corruption is deep- rooted here, president of the republic Askar Akayev says, according to a report published in today's "RABOCHAYA TRIBUNA" newspaper. Askar Akayev highly praised his recently renewed cabinet of ministers, describing them as "today they are the strongest workers".

Kyrgyzstan could have easily improved its economy by renewing cultivation of raw opium and selling it to fulfill the medical needs of neighbouring countries, the paper writes. Even in this year the republic could have earned a net profit of 200 million U.S. dollars from the sales of heroin. But after some serious thinking the state abandoned the idea of growing the opium, deciding to let the difficult time pass without getting into a new trouble. Now the republic counts on the development of the mining industry. A number of mutually profitable contracts have been signed with Canadian firms. The Canadians will begin exploration and development of rare and noble metal producing regions in Kyrgyzstan this summer.

"After becoming the president, I used to say that I need three years time in order to improve life in Kyrgyzstan. Sixteen months have passed. I could have reduced this time, if on the 30th of December 1991, in Minsk, the CIS leaders' conference could have given a priority to economic problems. But, to my regret, it is not happening even now", Askar Akayev was quoted to have said.

Tajikistan

Government To Push for United Armed Forces

OW1303195592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1659 GMT 13 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] At the impending meeting of the leaders of Commonwealth States in Kiev March 20, Tajikistan will vote for unified command of the United Armed Forces, a single border of CIS nations, and the passage of a packet of laws on social-legal defense of servicemen and their families as well as those laid off from the Armed Forces, the adviser to the Tajik President on defence matters Major General Bakhrom Rakhmonov said. In an interview with "Interfax" Rakhmonov said Tajikistans position on the question of military structure remains unchanged. The most important thing for the republic is its share in the financing of the armed forces.

General Welcomes Russian Move

LD1803001192 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1100 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Excerpts] The mass media reports that Russian President Boris Yeltsin signed a decree setting up a Russian Defense Ministry. The decree notes that all military units based on former Soviet territory and outside its borders come under Russian authority. Our reporter asked Major General Niyazov, chairman of the Tajik Defense Committee, to shed light on this issue. Niyazov said in a telephone interview that the Russian president decided on this following a Ukrainian decision to set up its own army. [passage omitted]

Gen. Niyazov added that Tajikistan is a poor country and cannot afford to maintain units stationed on Tajik territory and that it is not a bad idea for Russia to undertake maintenance of these forces. Tajikistan was contributing 800 million rubles (?annually) to the former USSR Defense Ministry despite its poverty. The plan notes that the current year's figure will amount to 1.5 billion rubles. Gen. Niyazov notes that all issues concerning the army will be discussed at a regular meeting of the heads of the CIS in Kiev on 20 March.

New U.S. Embassy Opens in Dushanbe 16 Mar

LD1803032792 Dushanbe Radio Dushanbe Network in Tajik 1800 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Yesterday, 16 March, the U.S. Embassy in Dushanbe was opened in the course of a ceremony. Edmund Mark Williams, the temporary U.S. representative in Tajikistan, expressed the hope that the embassy's opening will strengthen cooperation between the two states in various fields.

Communist Deputies Registered in Parliament

LD1703145192 Moscow TASS in English 1016 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By TAJIKTA correspondent Galina Gridneva]

[Text] Dushanbe March 17 TASS—A group of Communist deputies was registered in Tajikistan's Parliament. It is headed by Tajik Communist Party Chairman Shodiy Shabdolov. Explaining the group's goals and tasks, Shabdolov said the Communist Deputies are going to "uphold the socialist choice, the Soviet form of the social system and the interests of the working people" by parliamentary means.

Communist MPs [members of parliament], while advocating a multi-form economy for the republic, nevertheless give preference to the collective forms of property because only they can, at this stage, "ensure the economic and social guarantees of human rights and haul the republic out of the protracted economic crisis." The group numbers more than 50 deputies, the majority of whom do not occupy any command posts in the republic.

Members of the parliament's radical wing and deputies from among entrepreneurs also stated the formation of their groups. Parliament speaker Safarali Kendzhayev thinks the formation of parliamentary groups is a quite normal and legitimate phenomenon, which is typical of all of the world's civilised states.

"What is all-important is that the creation of groups does not generate unhealthy confrontation but serve to elaborate prudent and competent laws for the good of the republic," he said.

New Laws Adopted During Parliament Session

Trade Unions

LD1203192992 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 12 Mar 92

[Text] A law on trade unions has been adopted by the parliament of Tajikistan. The document says that the unions are independent of state government bodies, economic structures, and political or public organizations in their activities. The trade unions of Tajikistan are guaranteed the right to cooperate with professional organizations from the CIS states and to join international trade union associations.

Foreign Trade Bank

OW1503232492 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1520 GMT 16 Mar 92

[From "INTERFAX Business Report"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Tajikistan Parliament has passed a resolution to form its own foreign trade bank on the basis of the USSR Vneshekonombank insitutions. It functions will include the servicing of foreign debt, the provision of credit, the introduction of foreign accounts for export, import and business transactions, and the attraction of investment.

The Tajikistan Bank of Foreign trade has officially assumed the obligations of the former Soviet Union on behalf of the government, the enterprises and private individuals who held accounts in the USSR Vneshekonombank and its branch in Tajikistan.

Press

LD1603235992 Moscow TASS in English 1409 GMT 16 Mar 92

[By TAJIKTA-TASS correspondent Galina Gridneva—TASS]

[Text] Dushanbe March 16 TASS—The Tajik Parliament adopted a number of amendments to the republican law on press, to enhance responsibility of the mass media for the authenticity of published information.

The law bans the use of mass media for interfering with citizens' private life, publishing of deliberately false information, slanderous and provocative facts infringing upon the honor and dignity of citizens, state bodies, public associations and other organisations.

Any mass media, violating these regulations, can be punished by law, including complete banning of its activity.

Farming

LD1303175492 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 13 Mar 92

[Report over video by correspondent M. Nikulin; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] This session will go down in the republic's history as perhaps one which adopted truly revolutionary laws. The laws on agrarian reform, peasant farming, and payments for land will have to change soon the ever-declining situation in the republic's agriculture. From now on all citizens of the republic have a right to lifelong and inherited ownership of land for running a peasant or private farm, horticulture, vegetable growing, house building, or mastering traditional folk crafts. The law on peasant farming provides broad opportunities for developing farming. So Tajik farmers with their produce grown on their own land will present serious competition to state agricultural structures already this year. Tajik parliamentaries discussed and adopted an additional package of legislative acts bearing on legal and social issues and the state policy regarding young people. Having examined a statement by a procuracy representative on the facts a of bribe taking by Ikramov, chairman of the Dushanbe City Executive Committee, Tajik parliamentaries deprived Ikramov of his immunity as a deputy by a majority vote, thereby sanctioning his arrest.

Turkmenistan

Gas Supplies to Ukraine Reportedly Resumed

LD1703135492 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] Turkmenistan has agreed to resume gas supplies to Ukraine at international prices. President Niyazov has stressed that from now on all trading partners will pay international prices when buying raw materials from Turkmenistan.

Report Denied

LD1703175992 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1600 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] The press service of the Turkmen president has denied a report carried by today's Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network's "Novosti" newscast stating that Turkmenistan has agreed to supply gas to Ukraine. No decision on this has yet been made.

Defense Agreement Planned With Russia

LD1803000992 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 2230 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] At a joint sitting of the President's Council and the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Turkmenistan, it was noted that in the course of drawing up a treaty on cooperation between Turkmenistan and Russia, it is planned that an agreement on a defense alliance will be concluded between the two states at the summit.

Parliament Prepares Security Force Bill

OW1303005692 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1631 GMT 12 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Supreme Soviet and the Presidential Soviet of Turkmenistan are preparing a bill on forming a national security force which will serve as insurance against repeating past mistakes, the chairman of the republic's KGB Allashukur Ovedzhev said in a press conference Thursday [12 March].

He also said that the security forces of Turkmenistan and Russia will sign an agreement on their future relations in the area of intelligence. Ovedzhev said one of the main criteria of the agreement is to conduct operations which are not detrimental to each other.

Ovedzhev said that Turkmenistan needs to work with the native structures of Commonwealth nations in conditions of equality and considering each others' interests. Ovedzhev said the republic must also establish ties with other neighboring countries in areas such as the fight against international terrorism and drug trafficking.

Attempts To Reestablish 'Turkistan' Reported

NC1303103192 Istanbul MILLIYET in Turkish 8 Mar 92 p 13

[Report by Cenk Baslamis from Moscow: "Toward a United Turkistan"]

[Excerpt] The forces supporting the reestablishment of "Turkistan" have moved to realize their objective against the background of the restricting process initiated in the CIS countries following the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The second congress of the Turkistan Democratic People's Movement [TDPM], which represents several political movements in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan convened in Tashkent yesterday. Reports received in Moscow from Uzbekistan indicate that the first item on the agenda is the question of reestablishing Turkistan. The congress delegates are expected to adopt a decision to reestablish the former borders of Turkistan, which were removed in 1924; that is, after the October Revolution. The reports say that the TDPM program will also be changed during the congress.

Western Turkistan was made up of Kazakhstan and the Turkic republics in Central Asia; eastern Turkistan was the Turkic region in the western part of the PRC.

It is believed that the TDPM first plans to unite the Turkic peoples of the former Soviet Union with an eye towards reestablishing Turkistan. Nearly 50 million people, most of whom are of Turkic origin, live in western Turkistan today. The TDPM has not official capacity; however, it is strongly supported in the Central Asian republics. [passage omitted]

Niyazov Elected Head of New Democratic Party

LD1303144792 Moscow Radio Moscow World Service in English 1200 GMT 13 Mar 92

[Text] The first political party—the Democratic Party—has been registered in Turkmenistan. It's chairman is the president of the republic Saparmurad Niyazov. The party unites 52,000 members. The First Secretary of the party, (?Merit Orazov) said its objective is holding [as heard] an independent, democratic state ruled by law. We, he said, recognize many different forms of property and are open to all citizens of the republic. The Democratic Party of Turkmenistan intends to have its locals at industrial enterprises and various institutions. It will not interfere with its work but only socially protect the people. Preparations are also going on in Turkmenistan to form a Farmers' Party and to revive the Communist Party.

Uzbekistan

Reportage on President's Visit to PRC

Station Commentary

OW1303043792 Moscow Radio Moscow in Mandarin 1200 GMT 12 Mar 92

[Station observer Georgiyev's commentary; from the "Current Events and Commentary" program]

[Text] Dear listeners, Uzbekistan President Karimov will visit China from 12 to 14 March. On this, our station observer Georgiyev has written the following commentary:

The visit is in line with the political principles of the foreign policy pursued by the independent state of Uzbekistan. This principle aims to establish friendly relations on an equal footing with all members of the international community, but first and foremost, the closest neighbor of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The Uzbek leader has already visited India, Pakistan, Turkey, and other regions.

President Karimov has attached great importance to his visit to Beijing. There is a longstanding history of contacts between Uzbekistan and China. The ancient silk road, which linked Europe and Asia, ran through the territory of Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan today is ready to play the role as a bridge between the two big continents. As is known to all, in Uzbekistan, the state is not founded on the fundamentalism of the medieval Islam. The Tashkent authorities reject any kind of extremism, including religious extremism. The leaders of independent Uzbekistan have repeatedly pledged to develop relations with all countries free of political and religious doctrines. All of these have laid sound foundations for developing equal and direct contacts and mutually beneficial cooperation.

I would also like to call your attention to the fact that the development of ties between China and Uzbekistan will undoubtedly conform with the interests of other CIS members and will benefit every one of them, as well as China. Meanwhile, cooperation between China and Uzbekistan will undoubtedly exert a healthy influence on the situation in central Asia. The two countries have common problems and interests in that region. For example, both countries support the UN program for peaceful settlement of the Afghan question and stand for establishing an independent and democratic Afghanistan. In short, the leaders of the two countries will have things to discuss in Beijing.

Arrives in Beijing

LD1203201692 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1120 GMT 12 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Fedoruk]

[Text] Beijing, 12 Mar (TASS)—A snow-white airplane with words "Uzbekistan" captioned on its side landed today at Beijing's "Shoudu" Airport. On board the plane was Uzbekistan President Islam Karimov. The aim of our delegation's three-day visit, the Uzbekistan president told ITAR-TASS at the airport, is to open up a new page of equal cooperation between the two countries. We have a lot to learn from China. In the course of our stay in the PRC we will make an agreement on opening embassies, sign a memorandum on the principles of relations between the two countries as well as a number of documents on the questions of transportation, communications, trade, economic, and cultural ties.

The Uzbek people, continued Islam Karimov, have feelings of sincere friendship and respect for the Chinese people. Maybe we already are a little late with our visit to China and opening up our embassy here, but we are grateful to the PRC leadership for making Uzbekistan among the first to be recognized as an independent state and that China has expressed willingness to establish diplomatic relations and equal cooperation with us.

China is a great power, the Chinese people have an ancient civilization and history. Many things link us with China. One example could be the ancient Silk Road which was connecting the East with the West. We, said Islam Karimov, would like to give new meaning to this ancient route.

The Uzbek president and his entourage left the airport for the residence for honored guests—Dyaoyitai. A welcome ceremony during which Karimov will meet PRC chairman [title as received] Yang Shangkun will take place tonight.

Talks With Li Peng

LD1303182592 Moscow TASS in English 1636 GMT 13 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Fedoruk]

[Text] Beijing March 13 TASS—Uzbek President Islam Karimov has highly estimated his negotiations with Chinese State Council Premier Li Peng that ended here today.

Karimov told ITAR-TASS the sides will sign a number of agreements and documents to serve as a basis for further development of bilateral relations.

He said the two countries will maintain good and equal relations and reach mutual understanding. Uzbekistan will also study and acquire useful experience of its neighbour. Thus, the main aim of the Uzbek Chinese visit has been achieved.

Independent Uzbekistan has elaborated a political and economic strategy aiming to build open free society with market relations. There is no other way, said the president. Much has been done in this respect, including the adoption of a package of documents to stimulate this development.

Over 1,000 joint ventures have been set up in Uzbekistan, agreements with many foreign firms have been concluded.

The president stressed the major goal of Uzbek independence is to create normal living conditions for Uzbek residents despite their nationality and religion. Karimov stressed they cherish national and civil concord as the apple of their eye.

Comments on Results

LD1803100292 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1500 GMT 16 Mar 92

[Interview with Uzbek President Islam Karimov by correspondent Sh. Ganiyeva in Tashkent; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Ganiyeva] The official visit of Uzbek President Islam Karimov to the People's Republic of China has ended. What were the main political results of the visit?

[Karimov] We have turned a fresh page in our relations with the People's Republic of China. We signed 15 agreements with the People's Republic of China. This in itself speaks of the fruitfulness of our meetings and of the fact that the leaders of the People's Republic of China showed very great interest in us and Uzbekistan. In brief, a foundation has been established for further deepening and expansion of our relations. Literally in a week's time an ambassador will be coming here. The ambassador of the People's Republic of China to Uzbekistan has already been appointed.

Large Oil Field Discovered in Fergana Valley

LD1403203392 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1200 GMT 14 Mar 92

[Video report by M. Ganiyev from Uzbekistan; from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] This is the fifth well site at the Minbulatskiy oilfield in Fergana Valley. Many years of searching for oil in this region have been crowned recently with this powerful and at present uncontrollable gusher. More than 5,000 cubic meters of high quality crude oil has being ejected from a depth of 5,000 meters for many days running. According to specialists, such a large oil gusher has been observed only at 10 major world deposits.

The situation on the well site is complicated. There are thousands of people and special military anti-gusher units. Specialists from the industrial association Uzbekneft are doing everything they can in order to restrain the gusher. Oil workers from Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan have come to help their Uzbek colleagues. There is a lot of machinery at the site. The task is to suppress the powerful source as soon as possible and to put it into operation.

Meanwhile a whole river of crude oil is accumulating in artificial depositories. From here it is supplied for processing at a nearby oil processing enterprise in Fergana. It is too early today to talk about the reserves of the field, but one thing is clear: There is a lot of oil in the republic.

[K.Zh. Khakulov, deputy prime minister] Undoubtedly, oil today is politic at a world level; it is investment, it is an entry to the world market, and it is the economy of our republic, the independent Republic of Uzbekistan.

U.S. Embassy Opens in Tashkent 16 Mar

LD1603021892 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0130 GMT 16 Mar 92

[Text] An embassy of the United States opens in Tashkent, the capital of Uzbekistan, today. The Moscow Embassy informed us that plenipotentiary missions of that state are already operational in the capitals of many republics of the former USSR, in particular, in Vilnius, Riga, Tallinn, Kiev, Alma-Ata, Bishkek, Yerevan, and Minsk. It is possible that an embassy of the United States will become operational in Ashkhabad, the capital of Turkmenistan, also this week.

Government Recalls Servicemen From Republics

OW1703055592 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1917 GMT 16 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of Uzbekistan passed a resolution Monday [16 March] recalling all Uzbek servicemen serving in republics which are not Commonwealth members—Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and Georgia—those which have created their own armies: Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova, and also the Caucasus military district and the Caspian fleet.

The decision was motivated by the complicated social-political situation in those regions, the lack of a guarantee of the servicemen's safety, and the attempt of certain republics to "nationalize and privatize not only military equipment, but personnel as well."

The Uzbek Cabinet of Ministers was directed not to send any soldiers from Uzbekistan to serve in military units of the Commonwealth United Armed Forces stationed in these regions, the only exception being those serving under contract.

Foreign Sale of Military Hardware Claimed

92US0289A Moscow LITERATURNAYA GAZETA in Russian No 11, 11 Mar 92 p 9

[Report by LITERATURNAYA GAZETA own sources: "Where the Tanks and Prime Movers Go Is a Big, Big Secret—But the Uzbekistan President Surely Knows"]

[Text] **LITERATURNAYA GAZETA has learned that a secret decree on the abolition of the Turkestan Military District has been signed by Uzbekistan President I. Karimov. Among other things, the decree envisages the transfer of combat and other equipment from units of the military district to the Uzbek Ministry for Defense Affairs.**

Sales of combat equipment have begun at the Tashkent exchange. By prospectus, of course. Among the items sold were 40 MI-98 combat helicopters, 70 T-62 and 20 T-55 tanks. They were sold as scrap metal at $1,000 per tonne. Still, the Uragan universal prime movers attracted the most interest. They were being sold for 40,000 rubles apiece.

Whispered reports during the sale brought the most important news—the potential availability for sale of bomber aircraft.

Who is buying all this property of the now defunct Turkestan Military District? Payments have been made through government accounts. Quite frequently the name of Rustam Akhmetov, Uzbek minister of defense, has been popping up as a major figure in this operation.

The main question: What is the destination of the military equipment and ammunition which has been sold? The Tashkent-2 freight railroad station been closed to outsiders for several days: Trains with military cargo leave from there heading for Surkhandarya Oblast (Baysun) or Ashkhabad. To a certain degree, this gives grounds to believe that either Iraq or factions of the Afghan mujahidin are the recipients of the "goods."

Armenia

Turkish Reporters Catch Arms Dispatch on Film

NC1803083392 Istanbul HURRIYET in Turkish 15 Mar 92 p 17

[Nerdun Hacioglu report from Yerevan: "We Caught the Armenians Red-Handed"]

[Excerpts] HURRIYET has established that Armenia, which has accused Turkey of becoming a party to the Karabakh problem, dispatched arms to Karabakh on the day the cease-fire agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia was put into effect. My colleagues and I took photographs of the "Soviet" arms that were dispatched from Yerevan's Erebuni airport to Karabakh in a YAK-40 aircraft. We learned from an airport official, who was not aware that we were a group of Turkish journalists, that three similar flights take off from Erebuni to Karabakh every week. This proves that Armenia, which claims that it "is only concerned with the incidents in Karabakh", continues to interfere in Azerbaijan's internal affairs.

Although President Ter-Petrosyan informed us when we interviewed him on 12 March that "steps will be taken in goodwill aimed at resolving the Karabakh problem", our observations have proved that what he said was not exactly true. We saw something very interesting at Erebuni airport early on 13 March. A YAK-40 aircraft belonging to the Armenian Airlines Company, which has replaced Aeroflot in Armenia, prepared to transport arms to Khankendy [Stepanakert]. [passage omitted]

We saw a similar development in Yerevan. Armenian guerrillas arrived from Karabakh in helicopters to pick up provisions and arms made available for them by the Armenian Government. They later boarded their helicopters to return to Karabakh. We took photographs of an armed Armenian group. Making a victory sign, the group members said: "We are returning to Karabakh. We do not intend to return until we win the war." [passage omitted]

Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh Urged to Talk

LD1703172892 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1440 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Volkan Vural, Turkey's special plenipotentiary envoy in Moscow, went on a short working visit to Yerevan. Yerevan correspondent (Koryun Khumaryan) reports:

[(Khumaryan)] After bellicose statements by some politicians in the Republic of Turkey about the need to frighten Armenia before the Karabakh problem is discussed in international structures and after the buildup of anti-Armenian hysteria in Turkey—which was accompanied in this country by openly hostile actions toward our republic, such as military training near our borders, anti-Armenian rallies in some Turkish towns and villages, withholding some goods destined for Armenia, and the beating of Armenian athletes who were returning from Iran via Turkey—Turkish envoy Volkan Vural's visit to Armenia has provoked a lively, and I think rightful, interest in our republic on the part of both Armenian and foreign journalists. The Turkish ambassador met Armenian Foreign Minister Raffi Ovanesyan and republican President Levon Ter-Petrosyan. Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan addressed a news conference on the aims of the Turkish ambassador's visit and the content of his talks with the republic's leadership:

[Begin Ter-Petrosyan recording] We discussed two issues: Karabakh and ways to solve this conflict, and Armenian-Turkish bilateral relations, i.e. preparations for establishing diplomatic relations. We again received assurances that Turkey is interested in solving the conflict not only in Karabakh, but also throughout the region. Principles are common. I underlined that the Karabakh conflict most probably touches on regional interests and that the countries of the region must be the first to express their opinion on this conflict. We are interested in involving all interested parties in a peaceful solution to this problem. Our position is known; fortunately, I can say that our position already finds understanding in international organizations. It seems that we managed to convince the international community that Karabakh is an independent political entity and that Armenia can play only a secondary role. Talks must be conducted between Azerbaijan and Karabakh. Armenia will agree with any agreements reached between Azerbaijan and Karabakh. [end recording]

'Dissipation of Efforts' Noted

OW1703133892 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1252 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Report by correspondent Mikahil Mayorov from "Diplomatic Panorama"; transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] DP's [Diplomatic Panorama] correspondent reports that Cyrus Vance, special envoy of the U.N. Secretary General, is to arrive in Yerevan on Wednesday [18 March]. Speaking at a briefing for local and foreign reporters, Armenia's President Levon Ter-Petrosyan said that the upcoming visit to Yerevan by the former U.S. Secretary of State was organized personally by the U.N. Secretary General Butrus Ghali. The Armenian leadership, the President pointed out, welcomes the peacekeeping mission which will be conducive to "further internationalizing the Karabakh problem".

At the same time the Armenian President pointed with regret to "a dissipation of efforts" aimed at resolving the problem. According to him, initiatives stem from different localities, and sometimes it's impossible to consolidate endeavours.

In Tehran on Monday officials from Armenia and Azerbaijan and representatives of Iran which acted as a mediator signed a draft agreement on a settlement in Nagorno-Karabakh. Adviser to the Armenian President Vagan Papazyan who led the Armenian delegation described the program for gaining a settlement in the region suggested by Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati as "positive, constructive and quite acceptable". The program provides for ceasing fire, sending observers to the area of the conflict, exchanging prisoners of war and the killed, and for holding negotiations between the conflicting sides.

According to V. Papazyan, Russia has every opportunity for playing a positive role in the endeavours to resolve the Karabakh crisis, but displays sluggishness Armenia finds hard to understand.

'Aggravated' Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh

NC1703150192 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1300 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Following the last few days' lull brought about by a cease-fire, apparently the situation has again become (?sharply) aggravated in Nagorno-Karabakh. The shelling of Armenian settlements by units of the Azerbaijani National Army never ends.

Gegam Bagdasaryan, secretary of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic Supreme Soviet Press Center, reported that Stepanakert was shelled beginning at 0700 on 17 March. A salvo of 40 Grad missiles was fired on the city from Shusha resulting in destruction and casualties. The number of killed and injured during the exchange of fire is now being ascertained. The Armenian self-defense forces in Stepanakert were obliged to fire on Shusha to silence the Azerbaijani gun emplacements.

Stepanakert was also shelled on 16 March. Azerbaijani Army units fired 23 Grad missiles and [words indistinct] on the city. Three Azerbaijani military helicopters fired missiles on the village of (Sort) in Askeranskiy Rayon at 1750 on 16 March. Forty houses were partially damaged, there are also injured. The towns of Askeran and [words indistinct] were also fired upon.

It is reported from Stepanakert that the villages of Mkhitarashen, Chartar, and (Tokh) in Martuninskiy Rayon came under intensive missile attacks and artillery shelling from Azerbaijan's Fizulinsliy Rayon at 1800 on 16 March. Eight buildings were completely destroyed in those settlements, there are also injured.

The situation is tense in Shaumyanovskiy Rayon. Azerbaijani National Army units and Special Purpose Militia Detachments, using tanks and artillery, attacked the villages of Buzluk, Manashid, Erkech, and Karachinar in the early morning of 17 March. The freedom fighter Zhirayr Gulumyan was killed during the battle. The town of Shaumyanov also came under fierce artillery fire on the night of 16 March. There is destruction [words indistinct].

The Azerbaijani National Army is also stepping up attacks on Armenia's border towns. The Armenian Internal Affairs Ministry reports that the village of Voskepar in Noyemberyanskiy Rayon came under artillery fire from Azerbaijan's Kazakhskiy Rayon in the early morning of 17 March.

Spanish Paper Interviews President on Conflict

PM1703134192 Barcelona LA VANGUARDIA in Spanish 11 Mar 92 p 8

[Interview with Armenian President Ter-Petrosyan by Joaquin Luna in Yerevan; date not given]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] [Luna] Turgut Ozal, the president of neighboring Turkey, remarked last week that Armenia must be taught a lesson. Turkey has linguistic and emotional ties with Azerbaijan. Do you feel threatened by Turkey?

[Ter-Petrosyan] Turkey maintained a very positive neutrality in the first four years of the conflict, maybe because of its relations with the USSR. With the disintegration of the USSR, a certain instability and a power vacuum developed in the Caucasus. That was when Turkey and Iran showed some activity. For the present, Iran is observing its neutrality. Unfortunately, Turkey has lost it. Not only Ozal; all the politicians are vying to show their support for Azerbaijan and are playing the Karabakh card in the political struggle. That is a very dangerous trend. The international community must intervene in order to ensure that Turkey maintains a more neutral stance.

[Luna] Do you believe that the lack of neutrality is connected with Armenian territorial claims to certain areas of Turkey?

[Ter-Petrosyan] The Armenians, who were victims of the 1915 genocide, do have some claims. That forms part of the Armenian people's national psychology. But Armenia as a state has never made territorial claims. Turkey should take into account only the state's stance. Exploiting nations' feelings is very dangerous.

[Luna] At the international level, you have two assets with respect to Azerbaijan: the Armenian communities in the United States, Canada, and France, and the fact that you are virtually the only non-Muslim country in the region. Will you use these assets?

[Ter-Petrosyan] The first, yes. The diaspora could have a very active role in our economic development and influence the political circles in the places where it lives. The second, no. Imparting a religious character to our problems with Azerbaijan is the most dangerous thing that could happen. Religion has no influence in the Karabakh conflict. We Armenians have always been tolerant about religion, and we have large communities in Muslim countries.

[Luna] Will the recent resignation of Azerbaijani President Ayaz Mutalibov, pressured by the opposition, further intensify the conflict and postpone a possible peace agreement?

[Ter-Petrosyan] Mutalibov was a moderate leader who sought a peaceful solution, but, unfortunately, he was not in control of the situation and had to make concessions to the opposition, which is in favor of greater military pressure on Nagorno-Karabakh. Logically, this opposition must now demonstrate its effectiveness, and we are therefore afraid that it will intensify the conflict in Karabakh. There is another possibility: The opposition in Azerbaijan is not homogeneous, and it is possible that there will be power struggles. The most likely thing is that a situation will develop like that in Georgia (whose President Gamsakhurdia was violently deposed by the opposition).

[Luna] Azerbaijan is no longer supplying gas or oil to Armenia. Many people in Yerevan openly express their hatred for their Azerbaijani neighbors. Could the situation sweep you away, as happened to Mutalibov?

[Ter-Petrosyan] If we procrastinate, the situation could be unfavorable. For the present, we are fully in control. For Azerbaijan it would be advantageous for this internal conflict to acquire an external dimension. So far we have succeeded in avoiding this, but if Azerbaijan acquires many weapons and third forces—Turkey and other countries—interfere in the conflict, popular pressure could build up against the authorities here, too, and Mutalibov's situation could be repeated. For that reason, the international community should force Azerbaijan to sit down and negotiate.

[Luna] You place a great deal of trust in the international community, which has not resolved the interethnic conflicts in Yugoslavia—a European country...

[Ter-Petrosyan] I disagree about Yugoslavia. There has been a solution, although it has come late. The same mistake must not be repeated here.

[Luna] If there are also delays in peacemaking and the Azerbaijani attacks redouble in virulence, will you maintain neutrality and abandon the Armenians of Karabakh?

[Ter-Petrosyan] The people would not allow it.

[Luna] How far does your influence over the enclave's Armenian leaders extend? (123,000 out of a total population of 162,000)

[Ter-Petrosyan] It is something that is beyond control. My government is in favor of an agreement, but the Armenian leaders of Nagorno-Karabakh are more radical.

[Luna] At the beginning of the conflict, in 1988, the USSR was supporting Azerbaijan. Now it is the reverse.

[Ter-Petrosyan] Nowadays, Russia maintains complete neutrality in the conflict, and this does not suit Azerbaijan, which describes this neutrality as support for Armenia.

[Luna] The Armenians suffered genocide in 1915. Now Baku is accusing them of genocide in Khodzhaly. There is evidence that a massacre did take place.

[Ter-Petrosyan] Azerbaijan has caused an uproar in order to conceal its own barbarity. The barbarity began in Sumgait in 1988 (dozens of Armenians were killed), (Keraravad) [name as transliterated], and Baku (in 1990). I have information that there was an atrocity in Khodzhaly. I greatly regret it. It is a very dangerous course of events, and a signal to the international community.

[Luna] Why do you trust the international community so much?

[Ter-Petrosyan] Because if it does not mediate in the Karabakh conflict, it will be running counter to its principles.

[Luna] It would not be the first time.

[Ter-Petrosyan] Yes, that is true.

Security Council Discusses Fuel Shortage

NC1703193792 Yerevan Radio Yerevan Network in Armenian 1730 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] The Armenian Republic Security Council met on 17 March with President Levon Ter-Petrosyan presiding.

Gagik Arutyunyan, vice president and prime minister, delivered a report on the grave economic situation in Armenia in the face of blockades and [words indistinct] complex political conditions. He specifically noted that the liquid fuel situation is exceedingly tense and if no additional stocks are obtained, the existing fuel could last only a few days. After that, it will be impossible to operate industrial enterprises and would require enormous efforts to even produce the power needed for the people's social needs.

Under present conditions, because the Azerbaijani authorities are taking no [word indistinct] measures, it is difficult to quickly open the roads. The same (?situation prevails) in Georgia. Because of the unstable political situation there the railway is (?closed). Gagik Arutyunyan, assessing the situation as grave and without precedent, proposed that relevant measures should be taken and stressed the need for extraordinary measures.

It was also stated that political organizations in Armenia should be given detailed briefings about the (?situation) so that efforts could be made to (?overcome the crisis) and all could act in unison in ensuring national security.

Next, the Security Council heard a report from Defense Minister Vazgen Sarkisyan on the situation along Armenia's borders. While indicating that the (?border) defenses are adequate, the minister noted that we should not be satisfied and it is necessary to take additional measures to ensure self defense.

It was unanimously agreed that in cases of border incidents, it is necessary to (?avoid) falling into the intrigues of Azerbaijanis who, at all costs, are trying to draw Armenia into a conflict to conceal the real nature of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem. [passage indistinct]

Azerbaijan

Armenia 'Accused' of Bacteriological Warfare

MK1703144592 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Mar 92 pp 1,3

[Aydyn Mekhtiev report under the "Azerbaijan" rubric: "Republic Defense Ministry Has Accused Enemy of Waging Bacteriological Warfare. Front Line Has Moved Beyond Karabakh"]

[Text] The work of the extraordinary session of the republic's Supreme Soviet, which began 6 March following Ayaz Mutalibov's resignation statement, will continue 17 March in Baku.

Over the last few days the National Council (parliament) has been in session. It decided to set up an Azerbaijan State Defense Committee headed by Yakub Mamedov, current chairman of the republic's Supreme Soviet. The other members of the State Defense Committee are the prime minister; the ministers of national security, internal affairs, and defense; and also four opposition representatives.

Azerbaijani Prime Minister Gasan Gasanov is to submit the composition of his new cabinet at the 17 March session. Meanwhile the People's Front has stated that the opposition will agree to join a coalition government on condition that the Supreme Soviet meets two basic demands: that it abolish presidential government and announce that the self-dissolution of parliament and the transfer of all legislative power to the National Council, which is composed of 50 deputies.

According to information from the KHABAR-SERVIS agency, Etibar Mamedov, leader of the Azerbaijan National Independence Party, has turned down the offer of the post of internal affairs minister in Gasan Gasanov's new cabinet.

But what is the position of the premier himself? All the indications are that Gasanov supports the aforementioned opposition demands. Gasanov's opinion, expressed to the AFP agency, that "new parliamentary elections are totally necessary in the republic" should be interpreted as support for demands that the present Supreme Soviet with its conservative majority be dissolved.

In recent days the Turkish Government has shown heightened interest in the situation in Karabakh. Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel's government has held several cabinet meetings devoted to seeking a way out of the situation that has developed. All the indications are that Ankara is in no hurry to give an affirmative reply to the Azerbaijani prime minister's request that Turkey immediately intervene in the Karabakh conflict in order to impose a cease-fire. However, the Turkish authorities have recently started making increasingly insistent demands that Yerevan show greater flexibility over the Karabakh issue.

As Volkan Vural, the Republic of Turkey's ambassador to Russia, stated to your NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA correspondent, "the Turkish Government's plan to settle the Karabakh conflict, which was set out by Turkish Foreign Minister Hikmet Cetin at a full-scale NATO Council session in Brussels 10 March, was supported without exception by all members of the North Atlantic alliance." It is not impossible that the Turkish ambassador to Russia will visit Yerevan this week on instructions from the Turkish Government and press Armenia to agree to Turkey's plan. Moreover, Levon Ter-Petrosyan's statement that Turkey is unable to carry out a mediating mission because it openly sympathizes with Azerbaijan has caused some displeasure in Ankara.

In the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast the front line has now moved across its border to Agdamskiy Rayon. There has been fierce fighting here in recent days. General Dadash Rzayev, Azerbaijani deputy defense minister, is heading the defense of the Agdam region. He has told correspondents of republic newspapers in Agdam that "90 percent of the military hardware that belonged to the CIS 366th regiment which was in Khankendy has been handed over to Armenian formations." Rzayev also reported that mercenaries from the CIS Army are taking part in attacks on the Agdam region side by side with Armenian gunmen. Reinforcements from Baku have not yet arrived to help the defenders of Agdam, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to contain the enemy onslaught. According to Rzayev, during the last few days local defense forces in Azerbaijani villages have been obliged to abandon the villages of Syrkhavend, Manikli, Geneyli, and Khatymbeyli located just 5 km from Agdam. Meanwhile Mirsali Akhundov, a spokesman for the Azerbaijani Defense Ministry press service, stated that "Armenia has begun to use bacteriological weapons against Azerbaijan." According to Akhundov's information, since the beginning of March Armenian helicopters have been violating Azerbaijani airspace and dropping packages containing infectious agents onto the territory of the Kelbadzharskiy and Lachinskiy Rayons of Azerbaijan. According to information provided by the republic's sanitation and epidemiological service, preliminary analyses indicate that the packages contain substances harmful to the environment. Following a request from the local People's Front section, the organs of power in the Dzhebrail region bordering the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast have announced a general mobilization.

Vance Arrives for Talks on Nagorno-Karabakh

LD1803094392 Moscow Teleradiokompaniya Ostankino Television First Program Network in Russian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The United Nations has at last decided to deal with the question of Nagorno-Karabakh. Cyrus Vance, the UN Secretary General's special representative, arrived in Transcaucasia today.

[Correspondent M. Mamedov] Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Va'ezi arrived in Baku today. Observers are linking his visit with the continuation of the active peace-making policy of the neighboring country for a settlement to the Karabakh conflict.

An hour later, an aircraft from Geneva landed at the capital's airport. On board was Cyrus Vance, the UN Secretary General's personal representative. The guest was met by Azerbaijani Prime Minister Gasan Gasanov, Foreign Minister Guseynaga Sadykhov, and heads of embassies accredited in Baku.

Replying to journalists' questions, the former U.S. Secretary of State said that he is relying on his experience during the peace-keeping mission to Yugoslavia. Cyrus Vance noted that his main task is to promote a cease-fire and study on site the situation in the mountainous part of Karabakh to subsequently determine the advisability of UN involvement in the events in this region.

He had a meeting today with Yakub Mamedov, Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the Azerbaijani Republic. It is expected that tomorrow the UN Secretary General's personal representative will fly to the conflict zone.

Iranian Official Holds Talks With President

LD1803085192 Tehran IRNA in English 0709 GMT 18 Mar 92

[Text] Tehran, March 18, IRNA—Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Va'ezi heading a delegation arrived in Baku Tuesday [17 March] evening to follow up Iran's mediation efforts to settle the Karabakh dispute between the two neighbouring republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Immediately after arrival Va'ezi started talks with acting President and Chairman of the Azerbaijan Parliament Yakub Mamedov on the agreements reached during the tripartite Tehran meeting earlier this week. Va'ezi discussed the latest developments in Karabakh and Iran's stand and proposals within the framework of Tehran agreement concerning the date and ways of establishment of ceasefire, exchange of captives and bodies of those killed and ways of continuation of talks.

Mamedov praised Tehran's efforts calling the Iranian proposals as constructive. He said he fully supports continuation of Iran's mediation efforts, establishment of ceasefire and exchange of captives and the bodies of those killed. In continuation of Iran's mediation efforts between the two belligerent republics, a two-day meeting was held here Saturday attended by officials of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Iran. At the end of the meeting a draft agreement was issued which among other things called for establishment of ceasefire between the belligerent states and exchange of POWs and bodies of those killed in the clashes. The draft agreement is pending endorsement of heads of the two republics.

In a related development, head of the State Council of Georgia Eduard Shevardnadze in a verbal message to Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati welcomed Iran's mediation efforts between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Karabakh, the Foreign Ministry said Tuesday night. Shevardnadze said Georgia highly values friendly relations with Iran and that he is willing to cooperate with the Islamic Republic to settle the Karabakh dispute.

Volunteer Army To Fight for Azerbaijan

NC1803083192 Istanbul MILLIYET in Turkish 12 Mar 92 p 13

[Cenk Baslamis report from Moscow: "A Volunteer Army for Karabakh"]

[Text] Many individuals, including a large group of Russians, have moved to establish a volunteer army for Azerbaijan after the massacre of Azerbaijani people in Karabakh.

The idea of establishing a volunteer army for Azerbaijan was proposed some time ago by an organization which is trying to reestablish Turkistan by uniting Kazakhstan and the Turkic republics in Central Asia. The idea is gaining support among the Turkic peoples. The Democratic Party of Kazakhstan [DPK] has also moved to support the initiative. Meanwhile, many of the Russian, Tatar, Lezgin, and Bashkir people in Azerbaijan have joined the volunteer army.

According to an RIA report from Baku, the volunteers will be deployed in the areas along the border of Armenia and Karabakh. RIA described the volunteer army as "the battalion of international volunteers."

Earlier, Gasan Khodzhametov, leader of the DPK, requested arms and funds from Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev "to defend the Muslims in Azerbaijan against Armenian attacks."

In a statement to INTERFAX, Khodzhametov said that his party will launch a campaign for donations throughout Kazakhstan if the Kazakh Government fails to comply with his request.

On the other hand, Armenia has been worried by the move made in the CIS republics to establish a volunteer army to help Azerbaijan. Eduard Simonyants, presidential adviser on national security matters, has described the initiative as "an effort to turn the struggle waged by the people in Karabakh to determine their future into a religious war."

Gasanov Calls on Islamic Countries To Help

TA1703211992 Ankara TRT Television Network in Turkish 1800 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Nurettin Safak report from Baku]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] Azerbaijani Prime Minister Gasan Gasanov has called on all Islamic countries to help Azerbaijan. In a statement to Turkish Radio and Television, Gasanov claimed that no Islamic country other than Turkey has made any effort to solve the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict or has helped Azerbaijan in any way.

Pointing out that the Armenians will first occupy Azerbaijani territory and then ask for negotiations, Gasanov declared that when that happens Azerbaijan will not agree to hold talks. He added that this could cause a Christian-Muslim confrontation in the future.

Gasanov explained that many refugees are leaving the towns occupied by Armenia and that there are 300,000 homeless people at present. He inquired: Where are all the Islamic countries that assisted Armenia during the earthquake in 1988 and mourned for it? Where are they now? Can they not even send tents?

The Azerbaijani prime minister asked the Islamic countries not to be deceived by pro-Armenian propaganda and to send reporters to the conflict areas to find out the facts.

Reportage on Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh

Major Offensive Expected

LD1703232192 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1512 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Moscow, 17 Mar (ITAR-TASS)—The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] "is an object of military aggression," and its participation "is mandatory in any peacemaking processes affecting the interests of the NKR," says a statement issued today by the NKR Supreme Soviet Presidium. "Searches for a way out of the situation without the participation of plenipotentiary representatives of the NKR," the document stresses, "cannot lead to positive changes in the region."

Meanwhile, in Karabakh fierce battles continue with the use of artillery and missiles. An ITAR-TASS correspondent was told by the NKR Internal Affairs administration that last night the Armenian villages of Martuni, Gadrut, and Shaumyan rayons came under artillery fire. Some of them were shelled by "Grad" launchers. There are killed and wounded. Even "Mi-24" helicopters are taking part in the night battles, having shelled two villages with free- flight missiles. From 0700 this morning Stepanakert has been shelled by "Grad" launchers from the direction of Shusha. There are casualties. Trying to prevent ammunition being brought into Shusha, Armenian self-defense forces are mounting operations to block the Lachin-Shusha road.

The NKR Supreme Soviet press center also reported the concentration of a large quantity of combat equipment and infantry on the border of Nagorno-Karabakh's Martuni rayon, where a major offensive by Azerbaijani armed formations is expected.

Attacks on Shusha

NC1703152892 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri 1400 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Our editorial office established contact with the Shushinskiy Rayon Internal Affairs Department a short while ago. Militia employee Ragib Mamedov informed us that the city of Shusha is being effectively defended. Our sons from every corner of Azerbaijan have joined the effort to defend Shusha. Armenian units fired on the city from [name indistinct] and Shushikend with [word indistinct] and Alazan rockets at 0800 today and [words indistinct]. Measures are being taken to guarantee safe movement on the Lachin-Shusha motorway. The Armenians were firing on Shusha from time to time when we received this report. Mamedov said: Nevertheless, we are defending the city with all our strength.

Our editorial office also established contact with the Tauzskiy Rayon today. Mukharrem Mukharov, deputy head of the Tauzskiy Rayon Executive Authority, has said that the situation remained calm during the past few days. Armenians fired on Alibeyli a few days ago, however. A deserving reply was given to the bandits. A blow was dealt on the malicious elements who assembled in [word indistinct], but we lost one of our fighters during the clashes and three others were wounded. Defensive measures are being strengthened in the rayon and the special headquarters in the rayon is supervising this work. Necessary measures are being taken quickly and the enemy is not being allowed to advance even an inch onto our territory.

Army Takes Over Shusha

LD1703215592 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 2000 GMT 17 Mar 92

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] Early this morning, and again at noon, heavy gunfire was exchanged between Stepanakert and Shusha. The (?LUR) information agency claims that there are no peaceful residents left in Shusha, i.e., the town is now a base of the Azerbaijani Army. Some residents remain in Stepanakert. [video shows fighting]

Georgia

Zugdidi Agreement 'Final Stage' of Normalization

PM1703193792 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 18 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Besik Urigashvili report: "Agreement Reached in Zugdidi"]

[Text] Talks between representatives of the Georgian State Council and the armed supporters of Zviad Gamsakhurdia have ended in Zugdidi. According to reports coming in, an agreement was reached on all aspects of mutual demands.

The State Council will withdraw its military subunits from the city and guarantee immunity to those who participated in the resistance. For their part, the armed formations of the resistance are ceasing antigovernment activity, releasing hostages, and joining the National Guard as a single unit. The local militia will ensure order in the city and an administrator of the interim local government organ, elected by the inhabitants, will exercise power.

Dzhemal Kobaliya, one of the leaders of the armed resistance, stated in an interview on Georgian radio that the situation in the city has returned to normal, there is bread available, and electricity is back. The situation in other cities in Mingrelia is also nearly stable. Thus, it has proven possible to avoid the large-scale fratricidal clash which seemed inevitable even on 15 March.

The situation in other cities and areas of Georgia is stable.

The State Council leaders are certain that the conclusion of the agreements in Zugdidi heralds the final stage of the normalization of political life in Georgia.

Events Detailed

MK1703132192 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 17 Mar 92 p 3

[Nodar Broladze report: "'Government in Georgia Is Now Strong,' State Council Claims. 'We Will Not Throw Down Our Weapons,' Say 'Zviadists'"]

[Text] There have been quite a few events in recent days in Georgia, including the brutal action in Zugdidi. Georgian television showed the victims of this tragedy. The cameramen filmed the bodies (or, to be more accurate, what was left of them) brought the previous day from Zugdidi to Kutaisi. During the night of 9 March National Guard fighters quartered in a Zugdidi hotel were attacked by armed supporters of Gamsakhurdia. First they used explosive devices that spread an asphyxiating substance, then they seized the unconscious guards. As a young National Guard officer who commented on this footage explained, before shooting the captives, the fanatics cut off their victims' limbs. The screen showed charred torsos, a headless, limbless body, another body with several gunshot wounds in the chest, a body with ax cuts on the thighs... In all seven people were killed.

"What I have seen is worse than any fascism," Eduard Shevardnadze said in a television interview immediately after the video shots were shown. "How can all this not make us all shudder at the awareness of the danger that hangs over us?..." The head of the State Council called on people not to embark on the path of vengeance and expressed confidence that the entire population of west Georgia wants peace. "On behalf of all the members of the State Council I appeal to them, including the residents of all rayons of Mingrelia, trusting in their support," Shevardnadze said.

That same day a report of a deterioration in the situation in Senaki came in. Despite the state of emergency, rallies were held there. Unfortunately, the local military authorities' demand that the rallies disperse had no effect. As a result once again there were wounded, and one person was killed.

The State Council has been forced to take urgent measures. Ways of stabilizing the situation were discussed at the 14 and 15 March sessions of the State Council. The leaders of various political organizations, including members of the State Council, were sent to Zugdidi. But People's Front Chairman Nodar Natadze announced that he was going to meet with Valter Shurgaya, one of the leaders of the disobedience movement, as a private individual. "On the basis of my former friendly relations with Shurgaya, I hope to convince him of the futility of resistance employing the methods of sabotage and terror," Natadze said before his departure. "I believe that he and the others will stop despite everything."

Officials had a telephone conversation with Vakhtang Kobaliya, a former National Guard officer who supports Gamsakhurdia, and Georgiy Uchava, leader of the ex-president's bodyguard. Kobaliya was the leader of the barbaric operation that led to the deaths of the guards in the Zugdidi hotel. Asked "Don't Gamsakhurdia's supporters intend to stop their resistance?" Kobaliya replied: "We will resist until new elections to parliament are held... We will not lay down our weapons. if necessary we will burn Zugdidi to the ground and withdraw..."

The State Council address appealing to Georgia's population for peace for the first time officially states who is directing the destabilizing actions and from where: "...a small group of representatives of the government overthrown by the people has assembled outside Georgia in Groznyy. They are trying to hamper the establishment and strengthening of democracy in Georgia, are planning and partly actually implementing subversive terrorist actions, and discrediting Georgia in the eyes of the world public..."

"It is time the inspirers and organizers of the destabilization realized," the address says, "that the government in Georgia today is united, strong, and viable. Every action against the people will be suppressed by the will of the people."

According to the briefing given by the State Council emissaries who have returned from Zugdidi to a State Council session, a dialogue took place. "Their demands are that the situation in Zugdidi and other areas of West Georgia be controlled not by the government armed forces, not by the guards and 'Mkhedrioni,' but by local law enforcement organs," Consultative Council Member Irakliy Batiashvili said. "We met with Karkarashvili and Kutateladze (hostages of the 'Zviadists'—N.B.) and saw that they are not in any danger." Moreover, the parliamentarians said that Gamsakhurdia's supporters agreed with the idea of the need to stabilize the situation, showing some interest in this. The State Council session decided to agree to a number of proposed compromise solutions.

Meanwhile Zviad Gamsakhurdia, despite the change of political scene, is continuing to deal actively with cadre policy. In the Chechen capital he announced the dismissal of Akakiy Asatiani from the post of head of parliament and removed Dilar Khabuliani from the post of minister of internal affairs.

In the opinion of Georgiy Chanturiya, chairman of the National Democratic Party of Georgia, "talks with the criminals in Zugdidi are not essential, they should be put on trial. The same thing can happen in Adzharia, where Supreme Soviet Chairman Aslan Abashidze is arming people, forgetting that Gamsakhurdia armed his supporters in just the same way before his downfall," Chanturiya said. "Abashidze intends to fence himself off from the rest of Georgia, and that is an extremely dangerous intention."

Situation in South Ossetia Deteriorates

LD1803123292 Moscow TASS International Service in Russian 1100 GMT 18 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valeriy Shanayev]

[Text] Vladikavkaz, 18 Mar (TASS)—After a relative lull, the situation in the crisis areas of South Ossetia has been exacerbated yet again. According to the press center of the South Ossetian committee on information, the approaches to Tskhinvali and the Interior Ministry troops checkpoints were fired on last night with large-caliber machine guns, automatic weapons, and sniper rifles. The shooting came from the outskirts of the Georgian villages of Nikozi, Taramasheni, Ergneti, and Prisi.

No information on casualties has been received yet. The town was fired at by guerrillas supporting Georgian ex-president Zviad Gamsakhurdia. Ossetian self-defense units returned fire to suppress the attackers. According to information from the intelligence service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the South Ossetian republic, in recent days a concentration of guerrilla forces has been noticed in the villages of Georgia's Goriyskiy rayon, which borders South Ossetia.

On 17 March, Akhsarbek Galazov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet of the North Ossetian Soviet Socialist Republic, sent a telegram to Eduard Shevardnadze, chairman of the State Council of the Republic of Georgia, in which he reaffirmed North Ossetia's position on the need for talks to be held without delay on settling relations between South Ossetia and Georgia. The thinking in Tskhinvali is that the actions of Georgian irregulars are coordinated not from Tbilisi but from Goriyskiy, where the main forces of the supporters of the overthrown President Gamsakhurdia are to be found.

On 19 March a session of the Supreme Soviet of the South Ossetian Republic wil be held in Tskhinvali. The people's deputies are expected to focus their attention on holding talks between the Ossetian side and representatives of the interim Georgian government.

Meanwhile, in Tskhinvali economic problems and problems with supplies of vital necessities continue to be extremely acute. The town is getting no gas or water. On 17 March there was electricity temporarily, but Tskhinvali sank back into darkness again today. A column of trucks carrying food and medicine left Vladikavkaz for Tskhinvali along the Transcaucasus Highway today in an armored convoy.

Shevardnadze Attends Congress, State Council

LD1703210192 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1900 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] Many observers are interested in the development of the situation in Georgia following Eduard Shevardnadze's return there. A regular session of Georgia's National Congress—the body that unites radical political parties—was held in Tbilisi today. IPRINDA agency correspondent Tengiz Ablotiya reports:

Eduard Shevardnadze, chairman of Georgia's State Council, was present as a guest. In his speech to the Congress he stated that in order to get out of the crisis it is essential for Georgia to have full unity of all political forces and solid assistance from the West. Shevardnadze also expressed his negative attitude to the possibility of Georgia joining the CIS, and said that all questions connected with the property of the former USSR and also the status of CIS armed forces will be considered only in the context of mutual relations with Russia. He also confirmed the need to conclude a treaty between Georgia and the Russian Federation, which must be adopted as soon as possible.

After his meeting with political parties of the National Congress, Shevardnadze set off for a State Council session at which the situation in West Georgia, particularly in the town of Zugdidi, was considered. A report was heard from members of the State Council delegation, which returned this morning from the conflict zone. According to preliminary data, ways have already been practically mapped out for a peaceful settlement to the difficult political situation in the town.

State Council Appeals to Population for Peace

AU1703152692 Tbilisi SVOBODNAYA GRUZIYA in Russian 14 Mar 92 p 1

["Appeal by the Republic of Georgia State Council to the Population of Georgia"—Tbilisi; no date given]

[Text] Compatriots!

Recently, positive shifts have taken place in the state and political life of Georgia: The Military Council has given up its powers and transferred all authority to the civilian authorities—the State Council and the Provisional Government. An irreversible process of democratization is under way in Georgia: Radical economic reform is being implemented and the mass media has been freed from the dictate of the state.

The defective internal and external policy of the overthrown authorities separated Georgia from the progressive processes proceeding in the world, something that resulted in its international isolation. Today Georgia has directly entered into these processes and it already occupies its place in the international arena. Preparations are being made for parliamentary elections, the normal holding of which will only become possible given a certain level of stabilization of the situation throughout the whole of Georgia.

Evidently, such prospects do not suit those forces of the overthrown antidemocratic authorities that, having lost the trust of their own people and any hope for success in future elections, are trying in every way possible to destabilize the situation and cause a fratricidal conflict. Terrorist acts against the population and attacks on workers of the law enforcement organs and also on important social establishments are exceeding the bounds of political struggle. Such action constitutes, in essence, a bloody war against the vital interests of one's own country and people.

In particular, a series of bandit actions have been committed in the town of Zugdidi and its surrounding area as a result of which there have been human casualties, representatives of the law enforcement organs have been subjected to sadistic torture and killed, there is anarchy and arbitrariness in the town, and the population is completely unprotected from the violence of the terrorists and deprived of information about the positive processes under way in Georgia.

We have no doubt that the absolute majority of the population of Zugdidi wants peace and is opposed to the fratricidal conflict. The State Council of Georgia considers itself close to the dead on both sides and will make every effort to restore peace in the region.

Nor is it a secret from where and by whom these actions are being directed: A small group of representatives of the authorities that were overthrown by the people has gathered outside Georgia, in the town of Groznyy. They are trying to hinder the establishment and strengthening of democracy in Georgia, are planning and partially even carrying out diversionary and terrorist acts, are discrediting Georgia in the eyes of the international public, and are misleading a certain section of the population through disinformation, violence, and immorality, which are characteristic of them. At the same time, they want to lead the country away from that main path that will bring it to its worthy place among the democratic, economically powerful, and civilized states.

When the people's democratic uprising overthrew the authoritarian regime that was popular in words and antipopular in deeds, the new authorities called on all the participants of the conflict to engage in general reconciliation and cooperation. Unfortunately, many representatives of the overthrown authorities interpreted such a realistic position of the new authorities as weakness and have not only continued but also intensified their antipopular and antisocial activities. The diversionary actions and sabotage that are being organized by them are aimed at making Georgia dependent both economically and politically upon external forces. They are forcing the rural population in some places not to carry out spring work; they are acting according to the principle—the worse, the better.

They are further intensifying the criminal actions aimed at isolating Georgia from the external world by inflaming local separatism and attempting to dismember the unity of Georgia. Blinded by a greed for power, they are ready to head the entry into Georgia of a foreign military force and are preparing the ground for this: At rallies conducted by supporters of the former authorities, portraits of General Dzhakhar Dudayev [leader of Chechnya] are being exhibited alongside a barbarically disfigured portrait of the spiritual father of Christian Georgia, the Most Holy and Blessed Ilya II.

However, it is time the instigators and organizers of destabilization realized that the authorities in Georgia today are united, strong, and vigorous; supported by broad sectors of the population, they will not allow the establishment of a new seat of conflict and will not be diverted from the course of democracy, parliamentary elections, radical economic reforms, and, in the final analysis, consistently improving the living conditions of the population.

Each action against the people will be stopped by the will of the people itself.

Deputies of Disbanded Parliament Detained

OW1603224792 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1554 GMT 16 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] Six deputies of the Georgian parliament, which was dissolved by the new leaders following Zviad Gamsakhurdia's ousting, were arrested in Tbilisi the evening of March 16. The deputies, representatives of the "Round Table—Free Georgia" block, participated in the recent parliamentary session in Groznyy attended by Gamsakhurdia.

The Georgian representatives in Moscow released the names of only four of the deputies to "Interfax"- Tabadze, Taktakishvili, Kobulashvili, and Aprashdze. They were charged with antagonizing the situation in the Republic.

Rebirth and Democracy Foundation Launched

PM1703125592 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 14 Mar 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Besik Urigashvili report: "Presentation in Tbilisi, Fighting in Zugdidi"]

[Excerpts] A presentation ceremony for the Georgian Foundation for Rebirth and Democracy, created on the initiative of E. Shevardnadze, took place in Tbilisi's four-star "Metekhi" Hotel in the evening of 12 March.

In his speech, E. Shevardnadze expressed his belief that the foundation will be joined by many of Georgia's friends, in the West and in former USSR countries alike, and that this foundation's creation represents a small contribution to Georgia's rebirth. Shevardnadze did not name the actual sum accumulated in the foundation, but he announced that he personally has donated $100,000. However, according to confidential information, it has emerged that a certain Georgian-U.S. joint venture has transferred around $5 million to the foundation's account.

Journalists asked Shevardnadze to evaluate the session of the Georgian Supreme Soviet which was dissolved by the Military Council in January. This session opened in Groznyy. Shevardnadze replied that he would have just as much success convening a UN General Assembly in Tbilisi, thus emphasizing the event's insignificance. [passage omitted]

The Georgian State Council faces huge problems. E. Shevardnadze must withstand his first serious test in his new position.

Energy Crisis Almost Overcome in Republic

LD1703183292 Moscow TASS in English 1618 GMT 17 Mar 92

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Albert Kochetkov]

[Text] Tbilisi March 17 TASS—The Tbilisi Metro opened today after a two-week break caused by an acute energy crisis in the republic.

Snow melting in the Georgian mountains considerably increased the delivery of electricity by republican hydropower plants that enabled a complete resumption of broadcasts of the republican and Moscow TV programs.

Hot water supplies in Tbilisi residential areas is another sign of normalization in the Georgian capital.

Estonia

Intensive Military Flights Observed 17 Mar

LD1803134992 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1800 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] The Russian Army planned Air Force exercises in Estonia today. After the Estonian ministry noted this, it was decided to abolish the exercises. However, intensive flying of military aircraft has been observed today. Reports have been received from Paldiski, Amari, and the Kohtla-Jarve area. Toomas Puura, head of the state and border defense department at the State Chancellery, stated in our news bulletin at 1700 [1500 GMT] that we are not talking about the abovementioned exercises. Officials dealing with Estonian defense are still studying what kind of flights they were; we have no news of their conclusions.

In Latvia, too, Army movements were observed. Paratroopers were digging trenches near border posts. Observers link the Army movements in the Baltic states with today's events in Moscow.

Vahi on Measures To Combat 'Deep Crisis'

OW1803003592 Moscow BALTFAX in English 1744 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] In an interview with the newspaper "Rahva Haal" Estonian Prime Minister Tiit Vahi once again pointed to the deep crisis faced by Estonian society. In this connection, he said, the government is taking the following measures: inspection services are being restored at the republican ministries, the department on combat against economic crimes is being set up at the Interior Ministry, restrictions have been set on salaries of state-run enterprises' directors, exports of ferrous and non-ferrous metals have been banned (save for supplies envisaged by intergovernment treaties), etc.

The premier also said that the monetary reform is under preparation. According to him, the minimal salary in the republic is $12 a month (at the exchange rate of the Bank of Estonia).

Economy 'Entirely Dependent' on Eastern Market

PM1003152792 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 10 Mar 92 First Edition p 7

[Jurgis Tubinis report under the "Contacts" rubric: "To the Russian Market"]

[Text] Tallinn—"Our visit to Moscow and our meeting with Yegor Gaydar, vice premier of the Russian Federation, are of great political importance for us," Aksel Treymann, the Baltic state's minister of industry, told a correspondent of the newspaper ESTONIYA after returning from Moscow. The visit in question was the first official one by Estonian Prime Minister Tiit Vahi to the Russian capital.

The industry minister's optimism, expressed in the state press, is understandable. However hard the republic strives to gear the economy to the Western market, for the time being it is virtually entirely dependent on the Eastern market. True, approximately 1,000 Estonian enterprises today have real contacts with the West, and joint establishments are emerging, mainly with Sweden and even with the United States, but this is not enough. There is no need to speak of the dependence of the republic's economy on fuel and energy resources supplied from the East. To this must also be added a long list of raw materials and semimanufactures that are produced in the CIS countries and that Estonia needs, and a multitude of subassemblies—it is good that not all ties between local and Russian enterprises have been broken off yet.

But there is more to the nature of the Estonian market's dependence on the Eastern one—primarily the Russian market. In 1990 95 percent of Estonia's exports went east, and the situation was almost the same last year. Of course, this bore the imprint of the orientation to the Union market during all the years when the republic was part of the USSR. But the main point—and politicians seem to be beginning to realize this—is that the output of Estonian enterprises is uncompetitive on the Western market.

It was mutual interest that led to the signing in Moscow of the intergovernmental agreement on the principles of trade and economic cooperation between Russia and Estonia for 1992, which satisfied not only the Baltic state's industry ministry. The most important point—and a new one compared with the years of stagnation—is that mutual transactions must, in time, be conducted on the basis of world prices in freely convertible currency. But a shortage of dollars, marks, pounds sterling, and so on is in evidence at present in all the states that were part of the USSR, and so they agreed for the time being to conduct transactions on a clearing basis. This will be something like trade in kind—an exchange of deliveries with due regard for their actual value. Unfortunately, many years of a voluntarist approach to economic problems have reduced the quality of relations between the republics to such a level that even this period will not be easy.

Russia is to receive from Estonia goods worth $151 million. Deliveries to Estonia from the Federation in 1992 are planned at a value of $157 million. Incidentally, it was pointed out at a recent seminar conducted by the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the republic export council under the motto "Made in Estonia" that imports to Estonia at present exceed exports both in rubles and in dollars...

Latvia

Foreign Ministry Protests Russian 'Violations'

OW1503092092 Moscow BALTFAX in English 0844 GMT 15 Mar 92

[Transmitted via KYODO]

[Text] The Latvian Foreign Ministry has sent a note to the Russian Foreign Ministry protesting against constant violations by the Russian army of the Latvian-Russian treaty signed February 1. Under the treaty, in particular, the Russian army should coordinate movement of CIS troops with the Latvian leadership.

The note says the army's actions defying the treaty destabilize the situation in the country.

The note indicates incidents when the army's equipment and military servicemen moved across Latvian territory. It is pointed out that the number of military units stationed in Latvia is growing and their technical maintenance is improving.

The note says the Latvian Foreign Ministry would like to receive from the Russian Foreign Ministry explanations concerning the above mentioned facts.

Maneuvers Postponed Due To Society's 'Alarm'

LD1803023992 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 2100 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] The maneuvers of the air defense forces of the armed forces of Russia were not held on 17 March. The reason for postponement: the exceedingly great alarm in society. However, representatives of the army of Russia expressed assumptions that the exercises would, after all, be held next month.

Activity on Eastern Border Seen

LD1703221192 Riga Radio Riga International in English 2130 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] A senior Latvian Defense Ministry official has said that several Russian army paratroop units are displaying activity in the vicinity of the Latvian eastern border.

According to the official, the paratroopers are digging trenches and several tank-wagons of fuel have arrived in places stationing these units.

Latvian defense forces are ready to avert any possible provocations, stressed an unnamed official.

Russian Military, Foreign Policy Talks Open

LD1803000392 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1830 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] A regular round of talks between Latvian and Russian military and foreign policy experts began today in Ligatne in accordance with the previously reached agreement. This meeting aims to draft an interstate agreement on the army's withdrawal from Latvia and to coordinate the troops' withdrawal dates. Deputy Defense Minister Dainis Turlajs and Eriks Tilders, the government's counsellor on defense questions, are leading the Latvian delegation, while Sergey Zotov, the first deputy head of the Russian Foreign Ministry administration and ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary, is leading the Russian delegation.

Ministry Discusses Future of Defense Forces

LD1203200192 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 1000 GMT 12 Mar 92

[Excerpt] A news conference at the Latvian Defense Ministry ended about an hour ago. The heads of the ministry were meeting with journalists for the first time, and they found much to talk about. Although there seemed to be more Defense Ministry officials than journalists present, many lively questions were asked, and nearly all of them received satisfactory answers.

The journalists were mainly interested in the current state of Latvia's self-defense forces. It became evident that the recruitment of staff for the Defense Ministry and for the defense forces is proceeding normally, and that soon all the border guards will be armed, and therefore able to start defending Latvia's borders.

There was also plenty of interest in the question of who will be allowed to serve in the Latvian defense forces. The ministry's reply was as follows: Permanent residents of the Republic of Latvia, that is, everyone who pays tax.

Similarly, the question of whether it will be possible to form a purely national army was also discussed, in view of the fact that there are about 260,000 Latvians aged from 18 to 45, and just about as many males of other nationalities in the same age group. All recruits must be able to speak Latvian; this is particularly important in the case of officers, because if an officer does not understand the language, he will not find a place in the Latvian defense forces, whatever first-class specialist qualities he may have. [passage omitted]

Lithuania

Verification of Kaunas Occupation Order Sought

LD1703225492 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 2200 GMT 17 Mar 92

[Text] The government press bureau reports that the former USSR Seventh Paratroop Division, stationed in Kaunas, this morning informed the Lithuanian Defense Ministry that it received a secret telegram signed by Mironov, the CIS Northeastern Group chief, carrying an order to occupy and secure the former Lithuanian Republic officer's home—the Kaunas Officers' Club—which was returned to the Lithuanian Defense Ministry per Lithuanian Government Decree 641 on 16 September 1991. The Mironov order will be carried out by

1800 on 17 March. Defense Minister Butkevicius tried to contact Mironov on this matter. Deputy Prime Minister Vaisvila telephoned Russian Secretary of State Burbulis, who promised to clarify the situation immediately with Major General (Patskevich), chief of the Kaunas division, and to take measures to avoid misunderstandings. Deputy Prime Minister Vaisvila also sent an urgent telegram to Russian Deputy Prime Minister Shakhray requesting immediate verification of whether such an order does indeed exist, the implementation of which would rudely violate Lithuanian republican laws and the communique signed by Shakhray, and would harm Russia's international prestige. Should the fact become verified, it is requested to quickly terminate implementation of the criminal order, to investigate the situation, and to punish the individuals who risk peoples lives in an irresponsible manner. Defense Minister Butkevicius sent Mironov a telegram concerning responsibility before the law in the event such a step is taken.

Troops on Battle Readiness

LD1803120192 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 18 Mar 92

[Text] The government Information Bureau issued a report yesterday afternoon that at about 1600 hours [1400 GMT) the 108th regiment of the 7th Division of the former Soviet airborne troops deployed in Kaunas was alerted to battle readiness.

A group of officers led by Deputy Commander of the division Sannikov threatened the Ministry of Defense Kaunas Commandant Office, saying that they would occupy the Ramove, the former Republic of Lithuania Officers' Club.

After a conversation between Gennadiy Burbulis, state secretary of Russia, and Deputy Prime Minister Zigmas Vaisvila, and the conversation between Minister of Defense Audrius Butkevicius and the representatives of the Northwest group headquarters of the Russian armed forces in Riga, the tension was somewhat reduced.

Mr. Vilkelis, commandant of the Ministry of Defense Kaunas region, reported that at the moment officers of the Lithuanian police and the Ministry of Defense are in charge of the Officers' Club in Kaunas.

So far the situation is calm there.

Parliament Member Views Russian Note

LD1603204192 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1300 GMT 16 Mar 92

[Interview with Lithuanian Supreme Council representative Audrius Azubalis by unidentified correspondent in Vilnius; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Correspondent] There are rumors going around about a note from the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Lithuania.

[Azubalis] Yes, our Ministry of Foreign Affairs actually did receive a note from the Russian Federation's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 12 March. But, according to accepted diplomatic practice, I cannot quote it, publish it, or show journalists the text.

[Correspondent] But can you tell us its essence?

[Azubalis] Yes, of course. The essence is basically the treaty between the USSR and the United States on eliminating their medium and short-range missiles. In general this note says that Russia and Lithuania come under the category of countries where these abovementioned devices are deployed and that we must, let's say, also implement this treaty. We must allow the parties to the treaty to carry out on-site inspections.

But, Lithuania is in fact a third country in this case and was not involved in signing any treaty of the sort. Nobody discussed it with Lithuania, just as nobody discussed anything in 1940 and nobody discussed the legal basis for the introduction of former Soviet troops on to the territory of Lithuania. They are here without any legal basis.

[Correspondent] What do you think Russia is aiming to achieve here?

[Azubalis] It is hard to say. [passage omitted]